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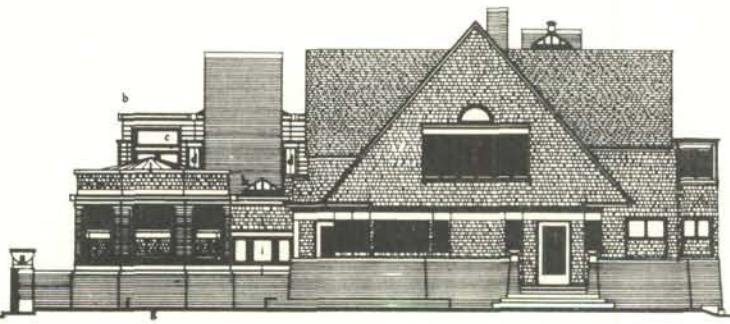

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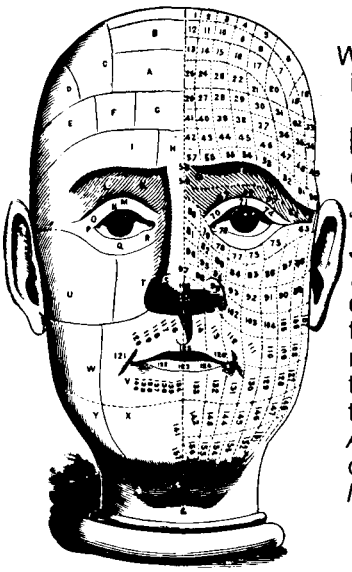

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR (ISSN 0003-0937), published quarterly since 1932 by the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa, 1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. Second-class postage paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional mailing offices. Copyright © 1979 by the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa.

Send all change of address notices, undeliverable copies, subscription orders, and other mail to Editorial and Circulation Offices, 1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Subscription rates: $2.00 a copy, $8.00 one year, $14.50 two years, $20.00 three years, foreign and Canadian $.75 a year additional for postage.

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The Despairing Optimist

RENÉ DUBOS

During November 1978 I attended a conference on the subject "Nuclear Versus Coal-Fired Power Plants" organized by the Bard Center of Bard College, a liberal arts institution located in the mid-Hudson Valley. The speakers were experts in various aspects of the energy problem, from government, academe, and industry. The audience consisted of local citizens and students alarmed by announcements that the Power Authority of New York State and two different corporations had proposals for three generating complexes in the mid-Hudson Valley. Because I am widely read on the topic of energy, I did not expect to derive much new scientific or technological information from the conference, but I attended it, nevertheless, to observe the attitude of the audience concerning the social aspects of the problem. This experience confirmed my belief that social attitudes, rather than technological or economic considerations, are now the most important factors in the formulation of energy policies.

In his introduction, the chairman reported that the conference was being sponsored and financed by the National Science Foundation, and that several other conferences on topics related to energy would be similarly sponsored at the Bard Center for the general public. Sponsorship of such conferences on technological problems by governmental agencies is now fairly common and I want first to discuss its social significance for the future.

In the past, the creation of a new power plant and the selection of the kind of fuel to be used for its operation were the prerogatives of technologists and economists, and required only the support of local politicians and the approval of the proper administrative authorities. During the past two decades, however, citizens have increasingly insisted—always vociferously and often violently—on having a voice in the shaping of energy policies. Citizen protest movements against nuclear reactors and, more generally, against the siting of any kind of new energy plant have occurred in practically all industrialized countries. In the United States, France, and Great Britain, they have greatly delayed, and in certain cases prevented, the building of plants that had been fully designed, financed, and licensed by government agencies. In Germany at the present time, they have practically halted nuclear power development.

Public involvement in the production of energy has become so intense in the United States and is so likely to continue that it is bound to influence many aspects of national economy. This new development certainly accounts for the fact that the National Science Foundation has begun to sponsor discussion groups in which experts from different disciplines and with different affiliations present the various aspects of energy problems to the general public—the hope being that exposure to expert opinion will help the public to participate more effectively in the decision-making process. Whether this scholarly approach to participatory democracy will be socially profitable remains to be seen, but it will certainly introduce the consideration of new social values into social design.

One example of new values being introduced into social design is provided by the

RENÉ DUBOS is professor emeritus at the Rockefeller University. His newest book is *The Professor, the Institute, and DNA.*

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fact that the interest of the public in the type of fuel used for the production of electricity certainly transcends economic and technological considerations. A large segment of the public worries about environmental quality and perhaps even more about the welfare of future generations. Public hostility to nuclear reactors, which was very general at the meeting I attended at the Bard Center, is probably due less to the fear of nuclear accidents in our times than to the knowledge that there are no dependable techniques for the disposal of the radioactive wastes produced during the operation of the reactors. Since some of these wastes will remain radioactive and therefore dangerous for thousands of years, they will constitute a threat for countless people as yet unborn. More than at any time in history, and in large part thanks to the moral concern of the general public, the very distant future has thus become an important factor in the formulation of policies for our own times.

There are many other aspects of the energy problem for which the general public is as much entitled to opinion as are the energy experts—for example, the comparative dangers of the different kinds of fuel. Nuclear reactors have so far had a remarkable record of safety, but while their potential dangers have not yet led to serious accidents, these can readily be imagined. Opposition to nuclear energy is, therefore, essentially based on the anticipation that such accidents will occur at some unpredictable time in the future. In contrast, there is a long record of well-known dangers associated with the mining and use of coal. Many men die every year in mine accidents. The life of countless miners is spoiled and shortened by black lung disease. Coal mining causes environmental degradation of water and land. The burning of coal produces a variety of pollutants that contaminate the local atmosphere, are spread over long distances by the wind, then are brought down to earth in the form of acidic rains that damage land vegetation and aquatic life, often very far from their initial point of emission. The burning of coal, as well as of other fossil fuels, inevitably results in the production of carbon dioxide which, according to certain climatologists, will eventually cause a dangerous warming of the earth through the so-called greenhouse effect. Finally, the use of coal also releases into the atmosphere fine particulate matter which may have an effect on the climate opposite to that of carbon dioxide. In any case, it is certain that the various forms of pollution caused by the use of coal and of other fossil fuels are occurring now and have global effects that are potentially extremely dangerous.

Experts can provide objective information, detailed and quantitative, concerning the relative dangers of the different technologies for energy production, but public choices will probably be made on the basis of more subjective criteria. Few people seem worried at present by the dangers inherent in the combustion of coal and petroleum because these fuels have been in general use for long periods of time and are therefore considered as part of normal life—whereas nuclear energy is associated with warfare in the public mind. It is certain, nevertheless, that many people will elect to gamble with the potential dangers of nuclear reactors rather than accept the inescapable and present dangers of fossil fuels. In fact, this is what recently happened in Scotland where the inhabitants of a city, which already had a nuclear reactor, opted for an additional one to supplement their energy supply although they could have obtained an oil-fired power plant.

In the long run, the most important criteria of public choice with regard to the production of energy will probably be factors affecting social structures and styles of life. Most of the new energy plants now under construction or being contemplated are much larger than the ones built in the past—irrespective of the kind of fuel used for their operation. Nuclear reactors have to be large because of the physical processes through which they produce energy and because of the complex and bulky protective devices needed to increase their safety. Fossil fuel plants also have to be large for economy of operation and for incorporating the new methods that make it possible to remove many of the chemical pollutants (but not all!) they inevitably produce.

Reasons of safety and economics thus make it seemingly imperative that nuclear reactors and energy plants based on the use of fossil

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fuels be under strict management. These considerations, however, do not necessarily apply to the various forms of energy which, directly or indirectly, are derived from the sun, such as solar radiation, running water, the waves and tides, the wind, all forms of vegetation and of organic wastes. Many of these "soft" sources of energy are well suited to community or even individual control.

Oil refineries, strip mines, nuclear power plants, huge hydroelectric facilities, deep-water ports, high-voltage power lines are considered evidence of progress by some people and threats to civilization and personal liberties by others. Sunlight, wind, running water, green plants, and other soft sources of energy are appealing to those who fear the garrison atmosphere of high-power technologies. From all points of view, in fact, there is a fundamental social difference between the energy derived from fossil fuels and nuclear reactors, on the one hand, and the energy derived from the various solar sources on the other. The likely outcome of the former is social centralization; and of the latter, social decentralization.

Fossil fuels represent highly concentrated forms of energy, which can be readily shipped to almost any point on earth. Like nuclear reactors, they can generate enormous amounts of electricity wherever they are located. These two methods of energy production, therefore, lend themselves to the development of the highly centralized technologic, economic, and social systems that have been most characteristic of the present century.

In contrast, there are few sites with three hundred days a year of unclouded sunshine or with steady strong winds or with large volumes of falling water. Furthermore, most such choice sites for solar energy are far removed from areas with large energy demands. The more general situation is that only small amounts of energy can be derived from the sun's rays at any given time in any given place. Similarly, conditions suitable for the exploitation of waterfalls, tides, waves, or wind tend to be highly localized and limited. The biomass represents a form of energy much less concentrated and more costly to ship than coal, petroleum, or natural gas. This is true even of organic wastes. Of the more than two billion tons of wastes produced annually in the United States, less than 10 percent are concentrated in cities, cattle feedlots, agricultural and timber industry locations. The basic problem in using most solar sources of energy is the problem of collection.

These limitations of solar energy sources imply that the first steps in their use must be carried out in fairly small units, a necessity that favors and perhaps almost imposes some measure of social decentralization. The utilization of solar-based energy sources, including the biomass, would provide a flexible and decentralized power source compatible with social structures vastly different from those based on huge electricity-generating stations using fossil fuels or nuclear reactors as a source of energy.

The partisans of decentralization also claim that centralized electricity systems are particularly vulnerable to failures due to sabotage, human error, or acts of nature. In 1976, the United States experienced thirty-five major power failures, and thousands of minor ones, affecting millions of people. In contrast, the only lights shining in Manhattan during the 1977 blackout were from Lower East Side tenements which generated their own electricity with a small windmill located on the roof.

It is certain that many people, perhaps the great majority, will prefer to have abundant electricity on tap without giving thought to its origin, its environmental effects, and its indirect social costs. But others will favor smaller-scale local technologies, more compatible with social decentralization and cultural pluralism. The intensity of emotions concerning these two aspects of energy can be appreciated from the following statements by Denis de Rougement, director of the European Cultural Center in Geneva: "The choice of nuclear power stations and retreatment plants for the *infernal* metal (plutonium) from which bombs are fashioned is daily increasing the risk of atomic war." In contrast: "Opting for local and even domestic-sized solar energy units means giving . . . small communities a chance of independence . . . of reestablishing a framework of civic participation."

"Pluto is lord of the shadows; he is as blind

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as a bat. But sunlight comes to us from the heavens, from Zeus the far-seeing."

The selection of energy sources for the future will thus involve hard choices based not only on scientific knowledge and cost-benefit analysis but also, and perhaps more important, on judgments of value concerning the ideal form of society. It is doubtful that one approach to the energy problem will prove to be so much easier than the others that it will be universally accepted. It is certain, furthermore, that reasons of sentiment alone cannot be a basis for selection. The final outcome will probably be a complex mix of centralized and decentralized sources of energy, selected to fit the environmental and social conditions prevailing in a given part of the world, and compatible with the expression of the multiple aspects of human nature.

Régime

DANIEL MARK FOGEL

My daughter
having
died
one
month, turning
thirty
the next,
I start to run
three miles a
day, sauna,
watch warm
beads brim
from wide
pores, feel
in grim
ardor
each melting
cell
rebel,
recharge,
relax.

DANIEL MARK FOGEL is an assistant professor of English at Louisiana State University. He is the author of a book of poems, *A Trick of Resilience*.

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Running and Other Vices

ARISTIDES

Whenever I see someone jogging by, body glistening with sweat, face contorted with pain, I think of a fellow with whom I went to high school, one Taxicab Rabinowitz by name. Rabinowitz earned his vehicular sobriquet, as W. C. Fields might have put it, from traveling almost exclusively by cab. I did not know him well, but on those occasions when I did see the Cab, as intimates called him, he inevitably appeared to be either emerging from or entering into yet another taxicab. Taxicab Rabinowitz was one of those boys who go directly from early childhood to middle age without ever stopping at youth. I imagine he began shaving around the age of nine. He wore pointed-toed shoes with alligator trim. He was wide in the flanks, soft in the middle; the omnipresent cigarette on his lip—a Pall Mall, unfiltered, if memory serves—was as much a part of his physiognomy as his well-pomaded hair. Taxicab Rabinowitz was of course unthinkable in a gym suit or athletic togs of any kind, with the exception of a checkered suit to be worn at the track. He was, with his cabs and cigarettes and puffy body, the very antithesis of all that is implied by the phrase "in shape."

"In shape?" I can easily hear Rabinowitz asking. "In shape for what?" That is not a bad question, to which I shall return presently, but first I want to say that the reason I think of Taxicab Rabinowitz whenever I see a jogger is that he, the Cab, is the last man in the world I can imagine jogging. Miami Beach, Las Vegas, Palm Springs, whichever pleasure spa Taxicab Rabinowitz now inhabits, he is surely not running around it but is much more likely to be seated—most probably in the back of a cab, from where he must long ago have concluded that cab meters, not human beings, are for running.

If Taxicab Rabinowitz is the last man in the world I can imagine taking up a regular regimen of running, then I am the next-to-the-last man. I am, if only in the physical realm, too virtuous as it is. Here is my dismal record: I drink, but scarcely ever to excess. I weigh exactly what the weight charts inform me I ought to weigh (the result of avoiding too frequent indulgence in fattening foods, every one of which I love). I play racquetball, usually twice a week. My cholesterol count is where it ought to be; my blood pressure is normal. I have recently quit smoking cigarettes, a habit of more than twenty years' standing. I both retire and rise early. Quite sickening, is it not? Also a bit worrisome. Enjoying such good health has of late caused me to think myself a perfect potential victim for being run over by a school bus. ("He was in his prime, Emily, never sick a day in his life.") But to enter upon a running regimen is more virtuous than even I care to be.

No mistake, it is the virtuousness of runners that appalls—the notion that their running makes them a select breed, an elite of sorts, whose elitism, though anchored in physical activity, goes well beyond the physical. Early last year the *Wall Street Journal* ran an article about people in cars harassing joggers and runners along roadsides: honking at them, spitting at them, nudging them with front bumpers, in some instances running them off the road. The motive, the joggers and runners assumed, was envy of their superior health. Ah, how readily the scene sets itself in the mind! A jogging couple, resplendent in polyester warm-up suits, blond brows aglow with a fine coat of perspiration; then up drives a long Lincoln, one of those gas guzzlers that got us into the energy crisis to begin with; the fat, beetle-browed driver behind the wheel shifts a cigar stub in his jaw, slips the Lincoln out of Cruisomatic, and,

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muttering obscenities, aims his car toward the jogging couple—who embody good health, sensible economy, and (let's face it) everything America could, and indeed ought to, be.

Implicit in this scene, too, is the notion that joggers and runners are an endangered species of sorts, though few things could be further from the truth. For twenty-six-mile marathon races in Boston, New York, and Chicago, runners turn out by the thousands; soon the mark of a bush-league town will be that it does not have a marathon. Yet marathon runners are but a minuscule portion of people who run noncompetitively: those who run before work in the early morning or after work in the early evening, the weekend runners, and those who run whenever they can. They have become part of the landscape, these joggers and runners, sometimes the first thing one sees out the window in the morning. One sees them chugging alongside the Potomac in Washington, up and down every street and footpath in Eugene, Oregon, at sunup in Manhattan, in middle western parks. Chicago has already had a jogging rapist whose victims have been women jogging in forest preserves. A commonly cited figure for the American running population is twenty-five million.

This surging pedestrianism seems to disregard strict social confines. Running/jogging is not something done chiefly by the upper middle class, nor is it preponderantly suburban. The young go in for it in great numbers, of course, but the middle-aged are padding along with them, and even the quite old are huffing not far behind. Running is unisex at all but the competitive levels, and as many (perhaps more) women as men seem to be swept up by it. Motives for running seem as varied as the backgrounds of runners; among them are wanting to lose weight, gain muscle tone, take fresh air and exercise, feel achievement, extend and test physical capacity. More arcane motives for running, if they were not present to begin with, have since been supplied. Running "highs" are now spoken of. In some of the books about running, not simply exercise but "ecstasy" is held to lie just down the path. In short, the oily fingers of the consciousness movement have taken hold. "Sweat reaches places nothing else reaches," says Dr. George Sheehan, one of the gurus of running. "Sweat cleanses you."

And the purveyors of running gear, one ought quickly to add, pick you even cleaner. Among the advantages of running, one might suppose, is that it would seem to require so little in the way of equipment; shoes, shorts, a road—doesn't that about cover it? Not quite. No sooner had the fad of running begun in earnest than abreast of it trotted up the publishers, manufacturers, merchandisers. These running dogs of capitalism are even now running all the way to the bank. They founded magazines, such as *Runner's World* and *The Runner*, that seek to proselytize even as they preach to the converted. Books in plenty continue to appear: practical manuals like *Guidelines to Successful Jogging, Aerobics for Women, Computerized Running Training Programs;* books holding out hope and promise such as *The Joy of Running* and *Run for Your Life;* biographies of long-distance runners; and books of philosophic purport such as *Running and Being: The Total Experience* (this last by Dr. Sheehan, who has become something of a J. P. Sartre in an athletic supporter).

Riffling through the pages of the new magazines devoted to running, one could conclude from the advertisements that there are more kinds of running shoes now on the market in America than there are feet. But this is not to speak of such auxiliary items as special arch supports, heel protectors, insoles; nor of fog-repellents for glasses, or skin lube to prevent chafing under the arms, or runner's mittens; nor of warm-up suits, singlets, socks, and shorts (one manufacturer sells shorts that he advertises as "almost like running nude"). Then there are metric conversion scales, chronographs and stopwatches, wallets that attach to running shoes, pouches to fit on the back of shorts. One of my favorite items is a "jogging stick," comparable to a military swagger stick, to be carried along while running and to be used, apparently, for beating off dogs, muggers, perhaps smokers.

Ours is an age of health, and the runner is surely our most fanatical seeker after health, a Hassid at the altar of Hygeia. Various explanations have been adduced for the excessive concern with health in our day. The novelist Mary Gordon, for example, feels that it has to do with politics taking a turn inward.

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Unable to control the external world of events, she explains, we seek to control the internal world of our bodies. "If we can't stop Seabrook," writes Miss Gordon, "maybe we can lengthen our Achilles tendons." There may well be something to this. Others seem to feel that a political profile can be discerned among running folk; as I write, a comedy revue in the Middle West carries the title *Great Jogging Liberals*. But I think something rather more fundamental is entailed. I think it is, at bottom, the fear of death that keeps joggers and runners jogging and running. This seems to me a reasonable enough fear, and one we all share. The only difference between joggers and runners and the rest of us, when it comes to the fear of death, is that they are doing something about it: they are running from it.

Our own age of health has a historical precedent in the early and middle Victorian age in England. The setting for the nineteenth-century concern with health seems to have been rampant sickness and arbitrary death. In a recent book, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture* (Harvard University Press), Bruce Haley notes: "Nothing occupies a nation's mind with the subject of health like a general contagion." England in the 1830s and 1840s, according to Professor Haley, was lashed by three tidal waves of contagious diseases: "the first, from 1831 to 1833, included two influenza epidemics and the initial appearance of cholera; the second, from 1836 to 1842, encompassed major epidemics of influenza, typhus, smallpox, and scarlet fever; in the third, from 1846 to 1849, there were occurrences of typhus, typhoid, and cholera." As a result of such devastations, the English became health-minded, and the body became a thing to be cultivated as sedulously as the mind—perhaps even more so. In England this was the time of the rise of many sports, among them mountaineering, cycling, lawn tennis, rugby, rowing, badminton, and roller skating. This was the time of the installation of games into the regular life of public schools. (The Battle of Waterloo won on the playing fields of Eton and all that—which, according to Professor Haley's researches, the Duke of Wellington never in fact said.) This was, finally, the time of the rise of what was known as muscular Christianity.

The analogy between the Victorian setting and our own is not altogether tidy, but it does have some things to recommend it. We currently live under no fear of contagion, but every one of us has had to shiver at the black prospects of cancer or heart disease. Much of our concern with diet in recent years is about these grim prospects. We must not choke up the arteries with fat, or send the blood pressure rocketing, or breathe the bad air, or swallow anything on Dr. Nader's Index of Prohibited Foods. ("Whoso speaks on Health," wrote the Victorian G. H. Lewes, "is sure of a large audience"—which might serve as a gloss on Ralph Nader's career.) Like the Victorian age, too, our own has seen an efflorescence of sport, and not alone spectator sport. Over the past decade alone, participants in tennis, skiing, backpacking, racquetball, and jogging and running have all grown hugely in number. In part this growth has had to do with an increase in leisure and a fairly steady level of affluence—what is nowadays considered an acceptable pair of ski boots runs to around $250—but in even greater part it has had to do with our slightly terrified concern about not getting proper exercise, being healthy, staying in shape. If the Victorians went in for muscular Christianity, we, in our more secular age, appear ready to settle for simple muscularity.

The late Robert Hutchins, when chancellor of the University of Chicago, used to say that whenever he felt like exercising he would lie down till the feeling passed, which inevitably it did quite soon. Hutchins also said that if you have to watch the meter, don't take a cab. (These two apothegms ought to qualify him as Taxicab Rabinowitz's man for all seasons.) But Hutchins's advice had certain limitations. Tall and slender, absolutely princely in carriage, Robert Hutchins was one of those fortunate creatures who came by his physical elegance naturally. (He probably also had most of his cab fares paid by other people or by expense account.) Hutchins was, it will be remembered, the man who dropped football from the University of Chicago; implicit in his decision was the idea that the life of the mind need have no further traffic with the life of the body—once the majoritarian view among intellectuals and academics. Hutchins believed and they believed, along with Montaigne, that it was sufficient to maintain "the soul and reason in good trim."

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In an extraordinary reversal, it now often appears that the best way to maintain the soul and reason in trim is first to have the heart and legs and lungs in trim. This, too, is not altogether new. Professor Haley quotes a character in a Charles Kingsley novel of 1871: "Believe me, it may be a very materialist view of things: but fact is fact—the *corpus sanum* is father to the *mens sana*." Most regular runners would seem to hold to this notion. Attend, for example, to James F. Fixx, author of *The Complete Book of Running*, arguing *against* the idea of running as a religion:

> It's easy enough to see how running got confused with religion. Running can, it's true, make you imagine yourself a better person than you are. Yesterday, I ran for an hour through a seaside park near my home in Connecticut. The last of the leaves were tumbling in the wind. I ran past three imperturbable skunks, a raccoon, a family of squirrels busily laying in a winter's supplies. A pheasant noisily took to the air at the sound of running shoes on gravel. By the time I got home, I felt refreshed and beatified. I know of no human activity, except perhaps sex, that can do so much in so brief a time, and do it so wonderfully.

Mr. Fixx is a temperate, no doubt altogether reasonable man. He does not talk about being in touch with the spirit while running; he does not confuse sweat with salvation. Neither does he equate modern-day runners with a persecuted religious sect, as I have heard another running maven, a man named Joel Henning, do. Yet when I read a passage like Mr. Fixx's above, why do I wish its author, not exactly ill, but a plague of life's little inconveniences? As he runs through his seaside park, I hope that he will one day perturb those three skunks sufficiently for them to loose their most noxious perfume upon him; that the raccoon will take a small bite out of his, Mr. Fixx's, running shoe; that the pheasant who now noisily takes to the air at the sound of Mr. Fixx's foot on gravel will instead smile at the sound of the same foot squishing in pheasant droppings.

Quite a little animus I seem to have built up here. Whence does this animus derive? From, I suspect, Mr. Fixx's and other runners' avowed self-satisfaction, from their not altogether suppressed smugness. Note, for example, the nudging reference to sexual activity in Mr. Fixx's last sentence. He is saying that his running is splendid, no question about it, but that his sex is even better. This leads one to think that a jackpot awaits the author of a guidebook to be entitled *Sex While Running*.

If my animus is strong, it is not solitary. More than one person has remarked upon the great boringness of running as a conversational subject. The vanity of the long-distance runner has become notorious. Tom Wolfe, among his series of monthly drawings in *Harper's*, has a particularly devastating drawing of a grotesquely misshapen middle-aged couple running through a Marin-County-like suburb. The drawing is entitled "The Joggers' Prayer," and the prayer reads:

> Almighty God, as we sail with pure aerobic grace and striped orthotic feet past the blind portals of our fellow citizens, past their chuckroast lives and their necrotic cardiovascular systems and rusting hips and slipped discs and desiccated lungs, past their implacable inertia and inability to persevere and rise above the fully pensioned world they live in and to push themselves to the limits of their capacity and achieve the White Moment of slipping through The Wall, borne aloft on one's Third Wind, past their Cruisomatic cars and upholstered lawn mowers and their gummy-sweet children already at work like little fat factories producing arterial plaque, the more quickly to join their parents in their joyless bucket-seat landau ride toward the grave—help us, dear Lord, we beseech Thee, as we sail past this cold-lard desolation, to be big about it.

The smugness of runners, their vanity, may be inherent in the very activity of running itself. Runners chalk up achievement daily, or at least on each day that they run. They have had the body out for a tune-up, a cleaning, an overhaul, whereas the rest of us haven't. Their situation is akin to that of the woman whose car is just out of the car wash or the man who has just had a shoeshine. How grubby, at such moments, everyone else's cars and shoes look! A pity, really. One would think people would have enough self-respect not to let their personal possessions get so run down. A man named Joe Henderson, a consulting editor to *Runner's World*, remarks in that magazine about not missing his daily run in nearly four years: "That's what I'm proudest of: There's something in the way I run that keeps me eager and healthy." Implicit in that sentence is the thought, "And you, Pudge, your *not* running is doubtless what

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keeps you logy and sickly." Reading the writings of runners, listening to them talk, one is reminded of Proust describing Albertine on her first appearance at the beach at Balbec, leading her little band of friends who all had "that mastery over their limbs which comes from perfect bodily condition and a sincere contempt for the rest of humanity."

The contempt of joggers and runners for the rest of humanity is often quite sincere, but I am not sure that it is deserved. Apart from competitive long-distance runners, who tend to be a self-enclosed and solitary lot in a lonely and grueling sport, most joggers and runners are not, at least in my experience and observation, among the best athletes. This may have to do with the fact that running has never been rated very high by serious athletes, other than as a means to an end. Often it has been used by coaches and trainers as a salubrious punishment for such misdeeds as reporting in overweight at the beginning of a season, missing a practice, fouling up in one way or another. Few athletes who have known the pleasure of sport at a fairly high level can content themselves with running as a source of satisfaction in and of itself. Serious athletes understand the need to be in shape, but in shape for something quite palpable: the game that they play. Joggers and runners are people who are content merely to be in shape for its own sake.

The pleasure of jogging and running is rather like that of wearing a fur coat in Texas in August: the true joy comes in being able to take the damn thing off. And because the runner or jogger regards running and jogging as its own end, an element of puritanical fanaticism easily insinuates itself. Thus a writer on the subject named Tom Osler, who does "not wish to be numbered with those who make claims of special life-extending benefits from it [running]," turns out to have run once for twenty-four hours straight, covering a distance of 114 miles (not, surely, everybody's idea of a day well spent). Thus *Runner's World* informs female readers that it is quite all right to run pregnant, right up to the day of delivery. There are people who are now beginning to run up mountains. Soon, doubtless, races will be held in which the contestants will wear lead in their shoes, or carry snow tires in their arms, or strap their accountants on their backs. If it feels good to remove a fur coat in Texas in August, how much better it will feel to remove a fur coat, leather leggings, and a tank helmet in Yucatan.

Committed joggers and runners would dispute all this. As for the argument that others use running as a means to an end while for them it is an end in itself, this they wouldn't concede at all. Running is not merely getting in shape per se; it is, many runners would reply, getting in shape for life. "Since I started running regularly, my outlook is better, my confidence greater, my self-regard higher"—such is the kind of testimonial one finds in the letters columns of the running magazines. Besides, what is the matter with getting in shape per se? Is not good health one of those things worth pursuing as an end in itself?

It is, up to a point. The point is when the concern with good health becomes unseemly—almost, one is tempted to say, unhealthy. The most cheering thing about good health is that it allows one not to think about one's health. Think too closely about it, dwell on it too long, and, lo, it will depart. Has there ever been a less robust crowd than the customers (and usually the clerks) in health food stores—with their sallow skins, dull eyes, bony carcasses, the human equivalent of horses ready to be shipped off to the glue factory? Joggers and runners, though they look rather better, are similarly preoccupied, even obsessed, with their bodies. "I eat bread sparingly," writes Tom Osler. "In the summer, I consume large quantities of fruit juices. . . . I do not use salt at the table or at the stove. I do not use sugar, because it seems to make my skin break out in acne." In an article titled "Running Through Pregnancy" in *Runner's World*, we learn that runners "have little trouble with irregularity. Some even experience a frequency increase in bowel movements." In the pages of the same magazine Joe Henderson reports that he thinks of a running high "as the way we're supposed to feel when not constipated." If one did not know what was being talked about—running—one might feel like an eavesdropper listening in on conversations in a nursing home for the elderly.

As it turns out, many joggers and runners do seem to require a certain amount of nursing, and the precise benefits of jogging and running are very much in the flux of con-

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troversy. As nearly as I can make out, internists appear to think jogging/running quite a good thing for circulation, respiration, general metabolism. Orthopedists, bone and joint men, appear to deplore it, citing its potential for injury: shin splints, stone bruises, tendonitis of the knee or ankle, spinal troubles. All physicians agree that great care must be taken, especially if one is past forty years old, when too strenuous a running program can be dangerous. To die from a heart attack while jogging seems neither a glorious nor a philosophical death. The French used to speak of dying as "stumbling into eternity," which seems to me far preferable to running toward the same destination.

While runners come from a diversity of backgrounds, there is much to unite them. An article in *The Runner* puts it thus: "The enemy lines are drawn. Divergent lifestyles foster a see-saw phenomenon. One side must be put down for the other to go up: smoker versus non-smoker, vegetarian versus meat-eater, runner versus non-runner." If ever two groups were opposed, surely these two groups are runners and smokers. Running is one of the few things that cannot be done while smoking, and smoking is one of the chief things runners despise. The same article in *The Runner* notes that "a lot of runners are extremely obnoxious about that [smoking]. They're pompous. They're rude. They go and take a cigarette out of someone's hand."

Yet why, pressed to a hasty generalization, do I tend to prefer the company of smokers over that of runners? The most obvious reason is that smokers are not always talking about their smoking and their bad health in the way runners, when not on crutches, tend to talk about their running and good health. Smokers as a group tend therefore to be rather less boring than runners. But the reasons, I think, go deeper.

Although Robert Coles has not yet written a book about them, smokers are today something of a persecuted minority in the United States. A friend who works in a large corporation reports to me that at least one department head there refuses to hire smokers because other people in the department stridently complain about the smoke. States and municipalities have of late held referendums—and some have put laws upon the books—outlawing smoking in public places. We may one day be headed for a new Volstead Act prohibiting smoking. Smokers meanwhile have come to take on the hesitant manners of the persecuted. "Do you mind if I smoke?" once the most perfunctory of questions, is perfunctory no longer. "Damn right I mind, buddy!" can come shooting back in response.

"The exquisite vice," as Oscar Wilde called smoking cigarettes, has become the nasty habit. Where once the cigarette was an accoutrement of elegance—think of André Malraux, Humphrey Bogart, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, all of whom could almost be said to have worn cigarettes, and worn them very well—the cigarette has now become a mark of enslavement to a shameful habit. "God gave us tobacco to quiet our passions and soothe our grief," says a character in Balzac. But no longer. Nowadays it is said that around 80 percent of all smokers would like to be able to quit.

That roughly 100,000 of the 390,000 annual deaths owed to cancer can be linked to smoking, that smoking is a great stimulus to heart attack, that it reduces sexual appetite in men, that some 37,000,000 people will shorten their lives because of smoking—none of this would most smokers dispute. As I believed it as a smoker, so do they believe it. The fact is that smoking has nothing to do with belief, or with rationality. But quitting smoking is one of the world's great small nuisances—"Quitting smoking is easy," said Mark Twain, a cigar smoker, "I have done it a thousand times"—so difficult in its way that comparing nicotine addiction with that of alcohol and heroin, while farfetched, is not altogether crazy. Having finally succeeded in stopping smoking after many abortive attempts, I now find that I have exchanged one habit for another, and today spend half my waking hours with a hard candy or lozenge in my mouth. I may be one of the first men in history to die of tooth decay.

Yet smoking, and struggling to quit smoking, does give one a keen sense of human imperfectibility. My attempts to quit smoking—so small and mean a thing, as I keep telling myself, to ask of so large and generous an intelligence—long ago killed off the last remaining vestiges of utopianism in me. I do not mean to imply that smoking makes any-

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one more intelligent. Given all that is known about smoking, it is a supremely unintelligent thing to do. Toward the end of my struggle I found myself smoking less and despising myself more. But this most pertinacious and exasperating habit teaches a healthy regard for human limitation.

Runners, on the other hand, are full of thoughts of human possibility. If one runs seven miles in the spring, perhaps by autumn one can do ten miles. The pages of the running magazines revel in the mention of runners in their seventies and eighties. I have read about a new magazine calling itself *Nutrition Health Review*, which (according to an ad in the magazine *Mother Jones*) asks, "Can You Live to Be 100?" The question is rhetorical, and the answer is that, watching what you eat and imbibe, you can indeed. But why stop at 100? Why not 120, or 150, or 200?

"What!" Frederick the Great is supposed to have said to a general who informed him of his troops' refusal to go into battle. "Do they expect to live forever?" Runners, like all truly self-absorbed perfectibilitarians, do seem to expect to live forever. Perhaps they do not expect to run forever—only up to the age of (say) ninety, at which point many could be got to agree to taper off. "I grow old . . . I grow old . . . ? I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled," says J. Alfred Prufrock. But were he a runner, he would doubtless add: "But, look, above my rolled-up trousers I wear the two-toned singlet of tricot from Sport International, which prevents chafing and whose mesh bottom prevents it from clinging, thus helping me keep dry. While below I wear the Wildcat running shoe, from Autry Industries, Inc., whose thick heel and ankle padding helps protect my Achilles tendons." Our new Prufrock shall no longer walk but now run upon the beach / no longer hear the mermaids singing, each to each / but only the pounding of blood in his ears / drowning out thoughts of death and other legitimate fears.

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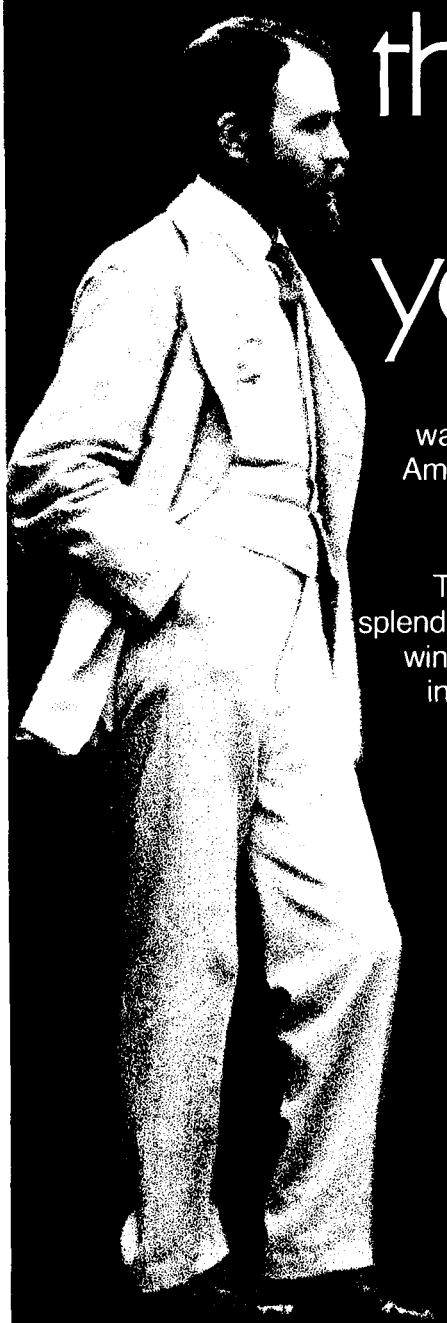

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Who Reads Novels?

A Symposium

Once upon a time—and not so long ago at that—the novel was easily the central literary form of the day, and not only for writers and professors of English but for anyone who had intellectual interests and a desire to understand the society he lived in. The novel was central in being indisputably the form in which the moral imagination had freest play and in which one could learn the most about contemporary life. In an old but still useful formulation, the novel, as befits its name, brought the news about the way people live.

Without going into a jeremiad about the death of the novel, it does nevertheless seem true to say that the novel has lost this central position among people who have made it their business to understand contemporary life. While the survival of the novel is not in doubt, it does seem that reading contemporary novels has become a much less important matter for people of intellectual and artistic interests than it once was. Such, at any rate, are the assumptions behind the questions that appear below. Granting for the moment that the assumptions are correct—and you may wish to argue that they are not at all correct—the questions seek to get at the reasons why the novel seems to have lost its cultural centrality and prestige. The questions are:

1. *Do you read many contemporary novels?*
2. *If you do, whose novels do you read and for what reasons?*
3. *If you no longer read many contemporary novels, why have you ceased to do so, and what kinds of reading have supplanted them?*

THE EDITORS

Clifford Geertz

1. Yes.

2. Whether or not the novel is less central in our cultural life than it was (everything is less central in our cultural life than it was), it remains a prestigeful thing to be thought to read them, and so one answers this

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CLIFFORD GEERTZ, professor of social science at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, is spending the current year as Eastman Professor, Oxford. He is the author of *The Religion of Java*, *Islam Observed*, and *The Interpretation of Cultures*.

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question with some unease when one in fact reads a great many. It seems a bit like flashing your cultural credentials. But I do read the received greats and near greats: North Americans such as Bellow, Updike, Mailer, Percy, Roth, Cheever, Heller, Pynchon, Barth, and all that crowd; British writers such as Powell (the lot! it's a disease), Fowles, Lessing, Greene, Amis; continentals, original or translated, such as Nabokov, Beckett, Böll, Robbe-Grillet, Grass, Solzhenitzyn; and a few Latin Americans and third-worlders: Borges (not a novelist, perhaps, but let's not get into that), García Márquez, Narayan, Chraibi, Lubis. All this plus some good minor writers (an institutional designation, not an evaluative one; many of them are better than the crowned heads)—a Stern, Elkins, Reed, Styron, Jones, Malamud, Burgess, Donleavy, Flannery O'Connor; some passing excitements, usually disappointing—*Fear of Flying*, *Ragtime*, *Snow White*, *Speedboat*, *Cat's Cradle*. This does sound pretentious, but I am rarely *not* reading a novel, usually a recent one, and am thus unable to recognize myself in your description of people "who have made it their business to understand contemporary life" (and a poor business it is!) for whom contemporary novels are unimportant.

Why do I read contemporary novels? For pleasure—hoped for, anyway—in the first place. (I get my "news" from the *Times*.) Out of habit, in the second. I grew up intellectually at a time when the novel was indeed "central" in cultural—or, more exactly, college—life, and read my way through so many syllabi, wrote so many term papers, and argued so many arguments that I got addicted. And third, though I think the *nouvelles* aspect of the novel quite secondary (the *roman* element is more important), it remains true that from novels one does pick up notions about the way we live now which one doesn't run into anywhere else. It would take an essay to say anything sensible about what these are, why the novel is the natural vehicle for them, and what good or harm they do to your head. But Updike's high school, Bellow's New York (more, I am afraid, than his Chicago), or Heller's war, rival, in their impact on my mind, my own direct traffic, intense enough, with those realities.

And finally, I started out to be a novelist. Didn't everyone?

3. Yet, and yet. I understand that things are not the same. In the first place, I now read only "arrived" novelists, those with the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval. I don't discover novels anymore, and I don't read any I don't have strong reason to think, from the reviews, are going to be worthwhile. I'm a standard consumer, tied to brand names; the risk has gone out, and with it some of the revelation. I never read first novels anymore (though sometimes, with a Doctorow or a Barth, I go back to them after reading a second or third). My students never speak of novels to me (though they do of movies). My friends read the same bottled-in-

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bond stuff I do. And I never pick a book from the library or bookstore shelf just because it looks interesting. Even rediscoveries—genuine ones, like Jean Rhys—now come media-prepackaged. I keep finding myself reading reviews of novels that sound as though I would be well advised to look into them—even better advised than reading another Roth or Barth—but knowing that I never will, unless the author produces five more and arrives.

All this may just be age, but I don't think so. The same thing is not true with plays, movies, paintings. Whence comes this establishment conservatism in novel reading?

Part of the problem is, of course, that I do my experimenting elsewhere—in ethnography (my "field"), in the human sciences generally, and in good popularizations of "real" science. The sum of all this, it seems to me, is that the position of the novel in today's society rather resembles (in *some* ways) that of the church. It is clear that the church is still a force; it is even clearer that it is now but one force among very many, and that its hegemony, such as it was (a matter subject to some exaggeration), is completely and permanently lost. It is also clear—to me, at least—that this is a Good Thing, and that it no more betokens the death of the novel than the similar displacement of the church from the center of society betokens that of religion. Anyone who tried to understand the modern world mainly through novels would make Madame Bovary seem a stark realist. I think almost everybody understands that now, as almost everybody understands that piety does not make the world go round. The novel is no longer the center of our cultural life because that life has no center: a fact only those who yearn for a unity in things that the modern world nowhere offers will regret.

Another thing that has happened (and here, too, there are analogies with what happened to the church) is that the line between novels, or fiction, and other sorts of literary texts has become much less firm. It is not merely the formal blurring of genres, as with *Ragtime* on the one side and *In Cold Blood* on the other, but the emergence of the realization that different sorts of texts have, in many ways, much more connecting them than they do dividing them. We now increasingly see ourselves as engaged in rather similar occupations—*similar*, not identical—when we read, or construct, or study a text of any sort that is at all imaginative. This is clear in the emergence of a literary criticism, first in Europe and then here, that sees its vocation in such terms, analyzing verbal representations, whatever they are called—and in the fusion of that sort of criticism with a certain sort of philosophy, a certain sort of history, and a certain sort of ethnography, psychoanalysis, political theory, or art history, similarly *textueliste*. Structuralism is, of course, the most notorious expression of this, though probably not the most lasting

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or most important. But though structuralism may—as I think, or perhaps only hope, is already happening—lose the direction of this general movement, the movement itself both broadens our conception of what counts as a text and weakens our sense of unbridgeable qualitative differences among fixed types of them, and it will continue, because it reflects the nature of things as they now are virtually everywhere seen to be.

The novel has lost whatever pride of position it had, not—or not so much—because it has declined in value in the eyes of those who "desire to understand the society [they live] in," but because it has had to take its place, for such people, among other sorts of "literature," as but another sort of voice in an enormous variety of them. It can still be heard and, so far as I can see, a great many people still listen. That they also listen, virtually simultaneously, to a great deal else makes for a certain nervousness, eclecticism, and uncertainty of purpose: a clutter in the mind. A place in the clutter is all any sort of text can now attain, and the novelist—in mine anyway, scattered in with *Russian Thinkers* and *The First Five Minutes*—still has that.

Owen Gingerich

Inquiring why I have stopped reading the contemporary novel is like asking me if I will stop beating my wife. I admire those around me who read any kind of novel: my wife as she manfully plows through *The Magic Mountain* or my son as he rereads *The Brothers Karamazov*. I sense a yawning gap in my education made by missing these and other classics, not to mention the novels of the 1970s. Yet my taste in extracurricular reading has always favored biography, history, travel, and adventure. I am the sort of reader who occasionally glances at the nonfiction best-seller list in the *New York Times* but never at the fiction list.

It's not that I have anything against novels—Max Brod's *The Redemption of Tycho Brahe* is among the last dozen books I have read. And I have read at least one recent novel (if it can be called that), Michael Crichton's *Eaters of the Dead*, though I must admit that it was his elegant fakery that ensnared me. Rather, I feel a greater sense of exhilaration and intellectual stimulation in reading, for example, George Steiner's *After Babel*, a magnificently polymathic book on language, translation, literary criticism, and linguistic analysis.

Nor do I have anything against contemporary novelists. I have read John Updike in *The New Yorker* (though I prefer the scientific biogra-

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phies of Jeremy Bernstein), and I have enjoyed Saul Bellow's perceptive travelogue, *To Jerusalem and Back.*

More recently I have read the autobiography of the historian William Langer, and Helga Sandburg's description of the remarkable intersection of the Sandburgs and the Steichens. A casual roulette brought these books to me, and though I would tout neither of them as extraordinary, they conveyed an informative and satisfying slice of twentieth-century American life. Even more relevant was Mike Collins's *Carrying the Fire*, the remarkably articulate biography of a man who circumnavigated the moon and who, as he rounded the back side of our satellite, experienced the cosmic loneliness of being totally out of touch with the rest of mankind. Herbert York's *The Advisors* depicted the personality struggles of those who created the atomic bomb, and surely such a book must rank high in the reading lists of those "who have made it their business to understand contemporary life."

Since I lack the moral courage to chuck excess books down the incinerator, my shelves are bulging with more volumes than they can graciously bear. In glancing over them I am appalled at how few of them I have actually absorbed. Yet titles leap to the eye that convey warm memories of a good read. There is Aline Saarinen's *The Proud Possessors*, a book that no doubt appealed vicariously to my own collecting instincts and that, incidentally, provided a key link in bringing the Hirshhorn collection to the Mall in Washington. Mary Hervey's *Holbein's Ambassadors* and Richard Altick's *The Scholar Adventurers* are two engrossing accounts of scholarly detection from widely different epochs (1900 and 1962 respectively). Here is Malraux's *The Voices of Silence*, and there is Stephens's *Incidents of Travel in Yucatan* in its original 1843 edition. Does James Watson's *Double Helix* qualify as extracurricular reading for a scientist? I curled up in an easy chair and read it on into the night to the very end.

But why raise the question about extracurricularity? Simply because what is required reading for the writer and critic is distinctly extracurricular for the scientist. The required reading for a scientist lies in journal articles, which pour in at an alarming rate. *Science* magazine expands along the shelf at 21 centimeters per year, the *Astrophysical Journal* at 38, and the *Physical Review* at a staggering 1.2 meters per year (although not even the editor reads the entirety). I cogitated these questions at an interdisciplinary science conference, and one morning at breakfast I asked the astronomer, the meteorologist, the dendrochronologist, and the sinologue at my table if they had read any contemporary novels. Silence. Finally one of them volunteered that he had recently tried Dickens. The two-culture dichotomy is apparently alive and well.

Nevertheless, it seems that for anyone "with intellectual interests

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and a desire to understand the society he lives in''—a category that presumably includes scientists as well as literary critics—the central literary form may no longer be the novel. The fault may lie not in the readers but in the novels themselves. Could it not be that an understanding of the society we live in lies as much in an understanding of $E = mc^2$ or the structure of DNA as in the bedrooms of suburbia or in the self-doubts of an anti-hero?

Sonya Rudikoff

How appropriate these questions are, coming just as I'm about to read a contemporary novel! I read quite a few of them, although there are increasingly more reasons not to do so. They are expensive now, they require bookshelf space, and unless they're awfully good they're not likely to be consulted again, in contrast to books on history, cooking, philosophy, gardening, statistics, embroidery, sociology, or silver hallmarks. More than two thousand new fiction titles are published annually, a sobering figure. Even if I'm among that 25 percent of the population which reads more than ten books in six months, how many contemporary novels must I read to have a sense of what is being written? Ten a month? Twenty? And, at nine or ten or eleven dollars each, what sort of income is required for this pursuit?

I'll interrupt myself to mention the public library, which buys many of the books I don't buy for myself. My own public library, staffed by remarkably competent men and women, buys or borrows numerous books of interest to me and others, including all the novels I may not get to read, and the science fiction, the mysteries and detective fiction, those sanctuaries of fantasy. (I find their mixture of puzzle and fantasy unappealing, but many readers don't share my view. So large a number of these works is thought worthy of publication, there must be some substantial constituency demanding them.) The novel I'm about to read was reserved six months ago, when I read the very favorable reviews, but of course I'm not the library's sole client. I might have tried to borrow it from the university libraries I use, although the wait would have been longer: if the university computers fail to retrieve the missing book, who would search for it in all those graduate student carrels!

So now I have this contemporary novel, one out of two thousand, one of the serious novels worth reading; not by Harold Robbins, Jacqueline Susann, or Barbara Cartland; written by a woman but not a typical novel

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about the liberation of a heroine. We who read more than ten books in six months apparently read in the evening, or before going to bed. But what of those among us who are involved with reading all day long? The editor, critic, writer, university professor? The lawyer with briefs, the banker or stock broker with company reports, the teacher correcting papers, the librarian, the guidance counselor, the educational tester, all the modern occupations pursued by reading? "There is no frigate like a book to take us lands away," said a great American writer, but I'm reminded that for most of her life she hardly left the house. Modern literate people *are* taken lands away in no time: to Chicago for a few hours, to New York for a meeting, to California for a day, to Europe for a conference in a hotel without even having to know what city is outside the hotel. What, then, does reading novels mean to us?

I'm worried about my contemporary novel—it is *Final Payments* by Mary Gordon—because I'm one of those people involved with print. How am I to get this novel read? I can't read while I'm working or when I'm shopping for groceries, or looking for birthday presents, or at the shoemaker's, the hardware store, the Xerox place. While cooking dinner or doing housework? While driving to pick up a child after basketball practice? At a dinner party? While listening to a Russian exile speak about literature, or while hearing another Russian exile speak about the KGB harassment of scientists? At a concert, a conference, while swimming, walking, sewing? Well, I ask in exasperation, when am I supposed to read this novel and the nineteen others that should give me a 10 percent sampling of the contemporary novel? I'm not sitting in the country, bored, with nothing to do but wait for *La Revue des Deux Mondes* or the latest box from Mudie's.

I spy a possibility, although it may not be suitable for others: lately I've had a bad back, a temporary affliction but one requiring rest on the floor for half an hour several times a day. In this position, reading is uncomfortable but can be managed, as typing can't be. There! I've already begun to read the novel. And, as for the general question, it's clear that only novel reviewers and professors of English must have time to read contemporary novels!

I'm worried about this novel for another reason: in the first chapter the author has used up so much of her material that her extravagance might have serious consequences. Like many contemporary novels, it's written ironically, even aphoristically, but only the first-person narrator has any vivid actuality, and nothing is fully presented. When I finish the novel, I think there will be no world I'll feel I know or want to know; this frigate won't take me very far. Nor does it bring much real news about the way people live, but then most contemporary novels don't do that either. We may not need it, however; we are not like the readers of Mrs.

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Gore, waiting to find out what's the clever thing being done in town, and, in any case, we have so many newspapers, magazines, television news and reports and talk shows, such unending and unfailing sources of information offered by the *papparazzi* of contemporary manners and mores, we are surfeited with news about how people live.

As I progress with my novel, I'm puzzled by it. Despite its show of detail about priests, Queens, parochial schools, sodalities, and teachers with names like Sister Scholastica, this novel's ability to bring me news of how people live seems far more limited than what I might find in some good community studies of Catholics in Queens. Or some article in a magazine like *People* which tells how the Kennedys differ from the Irish in Queens. And the obligatory scene, in which the lapsed Catholic girl goes to a doctor for contraceptives, is actually inaccurate, involving the prescription of a kind of IUD no longer used when this story takes place. Reports of contraceptive habits from the Office of Population Research or from Planned Parenthood would offer more reliable news of the way people live.

Is it perhaps a fond notion of literary people, then, that the novel brings news about the way people live? Once this must have been a way of making the novel seem respectable and worthwhile, serious, not just foolish Gothic romance or fantasies for shopgirls or pious tracts. We're all familiar with those arguments which say that fiction, like poetry, offers imaginary gardens with real toads in them, that it does with craft and imagination what the disciplines of history and sociology are attempting, and indeed does it better. An astonishing claim, really, and simply not true. I don't think I would want to defend James (in his political novels) or Proust as social historians. Among our contemporaries—say, Bellow, or Cheever, or Updike—if they bring news at all it is news only of how certain *men* live, because they don't present credible women characters. In fact, social history can document social and political movements and sentiments in such varied, interesting, and copious research as to make any literary person uneasy about claiming so much for the novel.

When James took the political milieu and life of Cristina Belgiojoso and distorted it for use in *The Princess Casamassima*, he did it not for social history but for his own imaginative purposes. Real life had to be "arranged" for his "orchestra," as Kafka later said of his own methods of composition. In the contemporary novel I've been reading—and have now finished—the problem was not that the novelist failed to bring news of how people live, nor (to glance at another argument) was it because this fiction wasn't moral. Like a lot of contemporary fiction, it was moral to the point of piety, although the moral problems weren't articulated but merely asserted, and, toward the end, asserted hastily, frenetically, out of all relation to the story. The germ of it could have provided a

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novel to trouble my conscience, as countless other novels used to do, if the fantasy had provided an analogy in which I could see the portraiture of my own cause, as Hamlet says. Did it fail to do this because the author could offer only one toad and no garden, and not even the palpable toad but merely the voice?

Now, as I wait for Günter Grass's new novel from the library, I'll read *The Civilizing Process*, which brings me news about how people have come to live as they do, and *Science*, which brings me news of how a cat's brain functions, how various molecules operate, how orangutans behave. I no longer expect to find another *Middlemarch*, but I'm saving two James novels to read in my old age.

Jeremy Bernstein

I am, have been, and I hope will continue to be an inveterate novel reader, and this includes contemporary novels—yea, even Erich Segal and Judith Guest, to say nothing of Saul Bellow and John Updike. Before I attempt to account for this abnormal behavior, let me also describe a category of novels I read that I think are largely unknown—and, in the main, for good and valid reasons. These are novels that deal with mountains and mountaineering. In my view, there has never been a really successful novel in English whose principal focus is mountain climbing and all that it entails. The French writer Samivel—his pen name—has, I think, written successful fiction about the mountains because he has avoided the trap (to be described below) into which nearly everyone else has fallen. This universal lack of success is, I believe, a corollary of the fact that most mountain paintings are also failures. (Oriental art, Chinese and Japanese, is more successful, and here again I attribute this to avoiding the trap.) The problem—the trap—is authenticity. Both the artists and the writers try to describe the mountain experience "authentically." This means that they set themselves the task of imitating photographs and genuine expeditionary accounts, and it is a losing battle. What is interesting in both the art and the novel is lost: namely, the leap of imagination that results in a work of art that is about everything and, incidentally, is set in the mountains. Samivel, who is both an artist and a writer, succeeds, at least in a limited way, because his mountains are largely in his head, although they do bear some resemblance to the French Alps.

Now why spend time reading novels, even best-sellers? My own

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reason—apart from the fact that they often give me pleasure—is instruction. A few years ago I used to spend some time in the summer walking with Bellow in Colorado. On these walks we would talk for several hours and I came away each time with the feeling that I had learned something about the human condition—his, mine, and the rest of ours. This is the same feeling I get when I read one of his novels, especially the more recent ones. I love to listen to his characters talk to each other. It is such good conversation. If only life were more like that.

This may account for why one would read Bellow or Nabokov or Updike, but why read *Love Story*? For me this is also instruction, but of a different sort. What does it say about a society whose best-seller lists include, week after week, *Love Story, Looking for Mr. Goodbar, Ordinary People, Even Cowgirls Get the Blues, Fear of Flying*—all of which I have read? I am not really sure that I know the answer. I do not think that the success of these novels is simply related to PR hype or even to reviews—which are, in fact, often bad. Rather it is related to the fact that each of these novels hits nerve endings in a huge number of readers and these readers spread the news. Each reader must recognize himself in these novels. It is not enough to state that they are "bad" and that, say, *Gravity's Rainbow* (which more people bought than read) is "good" or important. If two million readers have read one of these books—couldn't put it down—what does it mean to say that it is "bad"? Bad for you? Bad for what? Some kind of energy is being given off by this writing that is not being given off by a lot of other writing which we may think is, in some sense, superior to it.

Having mentioned *Gravity's Rainbow*, let me say a few words about why I think it is an important novel, albeit very difficult to read. In this novel I think that Pynchon has done something essentially new in fiction. (Perhaps that is why it is a "good" novel and *Love Story* is a "bad" one.) Pynchon began his life at Cornell as a physicist, and he appears to have retained an active interest in physics and engineering. His experiences as a physicist seem to have gone to his head and to have stuck there. They are now part of the furniture of his subconscious, and they keep rising to the surface when one least expects them to do so. It has been noted that science is to Pynchon what languages were to Joyce. Science flows in and out of Pynchon's fiction just as naturally as sex does. I would not call his writing "science fiction"—a genre for which I have very little affection. It is, rather, fiction that is illuminated by a scientific way of thinking—science as metaphor. To get everything that is in *Gravity's Rainbow* requires a good deal of scientific culture as well as a lot of patience. I would have been happier with the book if it had not been so grotesque. Perhaps Pynchon will mellow as he gets on, or perhaps he will simply disappear. Science is a young person's game and

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maybe the kind of fiction Pynchon has written so far requires so much energy that only a young man can do it.

It is clear from this rambling discourse that, far from having given up on modern novels, I await the next crop with enthusiasm. Perhaps one has to be a scientist to get such a naïve kick out of literature.

Jervis Anderson

I do not read many contemporary novels. This is not, however, because I have a low regard for them. I simply never developed the habit of reading much contemporary fiction, and there was a time when I read none at all. Since I think of myself as a lover of books, and since I care deeply about the survival of the novel as an art form, it gives me no pleasure to confess, or to disclose, that my active support of fiction as a continuing enterprise leaves a good deal to be desired. In this respect, however, both I and the contemporary novel are victims of my past.

I was raised on an island in the West Indies—although that does not, in and of itself, explain or excuse the history of my conduct. When I was growing up there, however, it happened that the society was one whose elders prized the manners, values, and literature of the Victorian age above all others. Some of them had been born in the closing decades of that age, others soon thereafter, and all had been reared in what survived of its nurture and admonitions. It was not unnatural—perhaps it was not avoidable—that they should have considered it their duty and pleasure to pass on the values of their tutelage. At all events, it was under such people—my elementary school teachers during the 1940s—that I was introduced to the reading of serious fiction.

For me, the life of imaginative writing was as wonderful a discovery as I had ever made. Added to this were the worlds of experience it revealed—worlds, out there, that were certainly foreign to anything I knew. I followed the directions of my teachers with great willingness and enthusiasm. The reading of fiction became one of the few things I genuinely enjoyed in elementary school, and, for that matter, in any later school. And as I progressed through my guided readings—as I moved from one assigned novel to another—I came to form an impression that represented one of the triumphs of cultural transmission: that no fiction had been written later than the nineteenth century and, further, that the English were the only people in the world who had ever written novels.

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During my years in high school I was given no reason to change that impression. If anything, it became stronger, for there was a greater number of novels to be read and my new teachers appeared to be even more knowledgeable than the earlier ones. Hence at no stage of my boyhood was I aware that any such thing existed as a contemporary novel. This may not, subsequently, have had any serious effect upon my judgment of the quality and worth of modern writing. In fact, I know, now, that it did not. But it did, I think, influence my approach to what is old and what is new. It did predispose me to choose, for my reading, novels that had been written and published some time ago over those that were hot off the press. And it did develop in me a subtle reserve toward novels that took for their subject matter the raw material of current experience. I believe I came to look at it this way: novels were supposed to bring the news of the recent past—to help illuminate the ground of morals and manners over which we may have traveled much too hastily to see clearly—not the news of today. In me, the tendency toward that belief is not as strong now as it once was, but it has not disappeared entirely. What helped to weaken it was my discovery, while attending college in America, that the twentieth century, all the way up to the 1960s, had produced a great and distinguished body of fiction, and that, very often, it made the present quite as intelligible as it made the past.

Still, time—in more than one sense of the word—has not relinquished its hold on me. I still make my way very slowly to a novel that is brand new. So although I do not read many contemporary novels, I do read a few. When a novel comes out—and I gather from reviews or from the comments of persons whose opinions I respect that it is something I would wish to read—I order it from my favorite bookshop. But I seldom read it as soon as it arrives. I put it on my bookshelf and leave it there for several months, to gather a little dust. When I take it down to begin my reading, I like to feel that some of the issues with which it deals have aged a bit; that its voice has cooled somewhat; that the critical passions it first aroused have abated; that I can now make my way through it, or make what I will of it, without the contending and distracting claims of its champions and traducers.

While I await the maturing of "my" freshly published novel, I read or reread histories, biographies, memoirs, essays, poetry, social and literary criticism, correspondence—and, of course, novels that are in no way contemporary in their subject matter. Here, too—speaking still of time—one has got to keep an eye on the clock. The obligations of informed citizenship require one to pay a good deal of attention to the newspapers and to the fine weekly and monthly and quarterly magazines. Thank God for them, but there are so many. They are always

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piling up, even when—away from one's work and from one's other reading—one gives them all the time and attention that one can. And if, as is the case with yours truly, one not only tries to make a living from writing but is also as slow a writer as any now practicing, the entire reading situation threatens at various times to become impossible. Under all the above circumstances—much as I might like to mend my ways—it seems unlikely that I shall ever be able to read many contemporary novels.

Gerald Graff

If it is true that once upon a time "the novel, as befits its name, brought the news about the way people live," then one obvious conclusion about what has happened is that we now have the news itself to bring the news about the way people live, and no longer need the novel for this purpose. This common enough diagnosis raises questions about what we mean by "the news" and the "novel" (not to mention "the way people live"). Written and televised journalism has not only elbowed the novel aside as our prime source of "the news" but, perhaps more important, has forced the novel to change its conception of itself and, to a large degree, to take itself out of the competition. Many current novelists, I gather from reading writers like William Gass, do not think conveying the news about the way people live is part of their job. Quite a few of them are a little insulted at the suggestion that it should be. On the other hand, some novelists do see themselves as bringing the news about the way we live, whether they own up to it or not. They even set themselves up as prophets in their novels. The trouble is, the news these novelists bring is frequently that modern life is unintelligible or absurd—which I think is false news. But let me go back over some of this, for the question of the novel and the news is complicated.

The tremendous expansion of the modern newspaper was as responsible as any other cause for the revolt against the realistic novel (and against other mimetic conceptions of art) around the turn of the century. Mallarmé wrote a famous essay in 1895 called "The Book: A Spiritual Instrument." The point of Mallarmé's essay was that the newspaper epitomizes everything that is crass, vulgar, crudely utilitarian. It is the essence of those forms of writing and thinking that boil meaning down to pure information. The Book, on the other hand, epitomizes everything that is subtle, fine, inward, and therefore invulnerable to middle-class

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appropriation. It is the essence of those forms of writing and thinking that embody their meanings in the richness of the absolute and untranslatable symbol. Though the kind of Book that Mallarmé had in mind was not fiction at all but poetry, the polarity he sets up between the newspaper and the Book can also be seen in the polemics of novelists against realism. In fact, Mallarmé's argument was merely one more version of what was already by his time a common view: that "literature" and "practical discourse" constitute wholly antithetical ways of seeing reality. With the triumph of this view in the academic and public culture of our own century, many people today assume it is quite natural to see "literature" as whatever makes no claim to propositional or representational statements. Literature is whatever "news" is not.

One of the aims of a novel such as Joyce's *Ulysses* was to be *not* like a newspaper, to communicate meanings in a way that is fundamentally antithetical to the way newspapers and other utilitarian discourses communicate them. *Finnegans Wake* went much farther than *Ulysses* did in not being like a newspaper, and later writers like Burroughs or Robbe-Grillet or the so-called "surfictionists" of today may go farther still; but in principle the object of all this writing is much the same. It is a simplification to sum up the entire modernist literary program as the effort not to "mean" in the way journalists mean, but it may be a useful simplification.

Over roughly the same span of months in which I was reading *Ulysses*, I read two novels by Dreiser: *Sister Carrie* and *An American Tragedy*. Whereas the principle behind *Ulysses*, as I have just suggested, is a kind of anti-journalism, the two novels by Dreiser are often unashamedly journalistic. *An American Tragedy* follows closely the factual accounts of a real murder and trial that Dreiser had followed in the Utica press. *Sister Carrie* makes similar use of news accounts of the 1894–95 streetcar strikes in Toledo and Brooklyn, and chapter 45 of the novel, "Curious Shifts of the Poor," is a reworked version of an actual piece of journalism Dreiser had published a few years prior to the novel. Sharpening this contrast between Joyce's and Dreiser's attitudes toward journalism is the fact that one of the chapters of *Ulysses*, "Aeolus," is a parody of journalism. The winds encountered by the modern Odysseus are windy newspaper headlines floating in the air of the *Telegraph* office. Joyce subverts what Dreiser takes seriously: the journalistic mentality, the novel as news.

And yet there is a sense in which it is Joyce, not Dreiser, who is closer to the true spirit of journalism. In format, *Ulysses* resembles the modern newspaper (or television news program); both are fragmented, discontinuous, full of unpredictable, incongruous, sometimes outrageous juxtapositions. Both suggest to the reader that though modern life can be

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organized according to structural patterns and classifications, it is doubtful that it can be *understood* as a coherent whole. The modern novelist's revolt against journalism turns out, paradoxically, to be compatible with a certain imitation of journalism, arising from the novelist's attempt to catch the rhythms of modern experience even as he sets himself against its utilitarian mentality. The risk in this imitative practice is that of infection: the novel acquires the bad characteristics of journalism by becoming "news" in the most debased sense—dissociated, incoherent facts.

Though Dreiser's two novels incorporate journalism in an un-ironic and possibly naïve way, their spirit is farther from the spirit of journalism than is *Ulysses*. These novels presuppose that modern life is not merely organizable in terms of structural patterns, but intelligible in its deeper springs of action—not necessarily to Dreiser's protagonists, to be sure, but to his readers. Dreiser lays bare the intimate connections between money, power, status, and sexuality in the urban industrial world. His novels say that modern urban life is *about* these things and their interconnections—unavoidably so. It is because modern life is about something that a story can be told which is in some valid sense not simply a chance happening or a projection of the artist's sovereign imagination. It is a typical, exemplary story that is true to our own story. Dreiser tells us that our true story is one of aspiration, success, and failure. He assumes that there is no getting out of it—that perhaps even those who think they can defect from this common story and go off and write their own private story are implicated in it. In other words, Dreiser presumes to understand *how social life works.*

My guess is that Joyce did not know how social life works in the sense in which Dreiser did know it. And I suspect Joyce believed that it was probably not possible to know—or that he had lost interest in knowing. This does not mean *Ulysses* is merely a chaos. Joyce "makes sense" of the life of the modern metropolis in two ways: (1) by reorienting his sights from the outer to the inner world, unifying the novel around the central consciousness of his hero; (2) by organizing the action—internal and external—around certain universal, timeless, mythical patterns, the most obvious of which is the quest for the father. These strategies permitted Joyce, in Eliot's phrase, to "make the modern world possible for art." What Eliot did not say is that these strategies made the modern world possible for art without requiring the artist to understand how that modern world works. The technique of "ordering" a novel—or a poem such as *The Waste Land*—around structural motifs allows the writer to deal with the modern world without having to understand it on its own terms.

Dreiser writes of the modern city as a critic, but his criticism comes

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from the point of view of an insider—not unlike the criticism of somebody like the journalist Mike Royko, who writes of Chicago today. Joyce writes of Dublin with immense familiarity, and it is possible to read and enjoy *Ulysses* for its "realistic" interest. Yet Joyce writes less as an insider than as a tourist—which is to say, as a person who feels he can neither understand the inner workings of the place he is in nor exercise control over them. Control over social life, *mastery*—those things which Dreiser's fiction seems to suggest are possible, even though many of his protagonists have no access to them—are consigned by Joyce to the bad practical people: the politicians, citizens, and other nonartists who rule the modern world. Artistic mastery is exercised over words only. The modern writer—in the wake of Joyce—seems frequently to write as a tourist writing for other tourists: people who have little hope of understanding and mastering their urban surroundings. (The honorific name for this tourism is "alienation.") I believe this is one of the things that have drained the sense of urgency from novel writing and novel reading.

One reason why Dreiser could try to make his novels a vehicle for the news about the way people live was his belief that there is such a thing as typical human experience. To talk about "the way people live" is to assume there is some common way of life, something everybody shares and nobody can escape. Something seems to have happened to this belief in typicality. In 1961 Philip Roth wrote an essay that may help us understand what happened. The essay, titled "Writing American Fiction," has had wide circulation. Roth's "moral," as he stated it, was "that the American writer in the middle of the twentieth century has his hands full in trying to understand, describe, and then make *credible* much of American reality. It stupefies, it sickens, it infuriates, and finally it is even a kind of embarrassment to one's own meager imagination. The actuality is continually outdoing our talents, and the culture tosses up figures almost daily that are the envy of any novelist." Roth went on to name a few such figures, and though some of them are now forgotten, we understand what he means: Charles Van Doren, Roy Cohn and David Schine, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and so forth.

Roth's conclusions were startling indeed. From what sources had he derived them? Clearly, from the news. Roth began his essay with an account of a Chicago kidnap-murder of the late fifties that had been widely covered by press and television. He mentioned several of the grotesque aspects of the case, or rather of the journalistic atmosphere that surrounded the case. One suspect, a skid-row degenerate with a flair for guitar picking, became on his release from custody a singer in a Chicago nightclub at a large salary. A local newspaper launched a contest: "How do you think the Grimes girls were murdered?" Again the point is clear: how can a novelist bring the news about the way people

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live, Roth was asking, when the way they live is evidently as crazy, senseless, and stupefying as this? How can he make his account of the typicalities of experience *credible* (the italics are Roth's) when real life has become routinely incredible? I think Roth was saying something different from the hoary platitude that "life is stranger than fiction." He was saying, in effect, that life *is* fiction, that something has happened to "real life" which makes it no longer real, and thus no longer intelligible and treatable through the ideas, conventions, and forms Dreiser had used—or maybe even those Joyce had used.

We all know what Roth is getting at about the feeling of unreality, the craziness of modern life. We all have that feeling a great deal of the time, and nobody would claim that events since 1961 have lessened its intensity. But what follows from this feeling as regards the writing of novels? Is it really true that the novelist has to abandon his old strategies? Roth's own conclusion, evidently, was that he had to indeed. It was not too long after this essay that Roth's fictional practice seemed to catch up with his theory. I refer to his break from the realism of his first three books of fiction toward the mode represented by *Portnoy's Complaint* (1969), *Our Gang* (1971), *The Breast* (1972), and *The Great American Novel* (1973). I do not know whether any critic has yet suggested that the slapstick and self-parody, the general clowning around, of these four works was an adaptation to the awakening Roth had declared in "Writing American Fiction." It is as if Roth had decided that since life had become crazy and puerile, the novel had to follow suit. And has he now—in evidently abandoning the experiment in his last two novels, *My Life as a Man* and *The Professor of Desire*—decided that his earlier diagnosis of the situation was wrong?

I hope he has, not only because I think it *was* wrong but also because I have read these last two novels with pleasure and wish more novels of this kind were attempted by writers with Roth's talent. His essay is a symptom of what can happen when a serious intellectual lets his view of his writing be unduly influenced by what I would call the journalistic view of reality. I have already described that view as the view that reality is unintelligible and uncontrollable; a corollary of it is that there is no such thing as typical experience, or that experience is typically absurd and mad, or typically untypical and eccentric. This is the *People* magazine view of reality. (When I first encountered *People*, I was puzzled by the fact that the subjects chosen for treatment seemed not to exemplify anything, not even the smart "lifestyles" that are exemplified in *Playboy*, *Esquire*, and the Sunday supplements. Then it occurred to me that this very lack of exemplification might be what *People* is really about, that the people in it stand for nothing; that in its pages "people" have finally become meaningless. If this is so, then *People* may be the ulti-

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mate logical expression of the journalistic view of reality, which *People*'s fans share with writers of advanced contemporary fiction.) When Roth decides that the existence of a Charles Van Doren or a Roy Cohn is an "embarrassment" to his imagination, he accedes to the *People* magazine view of reality.

When I accuse Roth and other writers of acceding to the journalistic view of reality, I do not of course mean they are necessarily happy with this view or with the aspects of modern life it points to. For one can accede to the journalistic view of reality while rebelling against it at the same time. Contemporary writers, in fact, do this all the time, which is just the trouble. Their critical perspective has been infected by the thing they criticize. Nor do I mean to say that there is no truth at all in the journalistic view of reality or that writers should dismiss it. It is there and it has to be confronted somehow; just how is a serious problem to which I do not have the answer. My complaint is that writers have chosen easy answers, answers dictated more by literary ideology than by reality.

I realize that these notions may be rationalizations of my own philistine prejudices—and my failure to keep up with contemporary fiction as much as I should. But it may be that an enlightened philistinism right now would not be a bad thing for the novel, and for our not particularly lively arts. When the nineteenth-century philistines arose to complain about the perverse things they thought modern artists were doing to the arts, they at least cared. Lively debates occurred, and tomatoes and chairs were occasionally hurled. That today's artist is safe from tomatoes and chairs may be progress, but that he is safe from criticism is not. The absence of a critical public is one of the things that of late have made "culture" an extremely dull affair.

I suspect it is the cultural atmosphere surrounding the novel that is dead, not the novel itself. There does not seem to be any decline in the number of people who buy, and perhaps read, so-called serious fiction. On the contrary, there may well be more such readers than ever, on account of the spread of higher education. What deadens the atmosphere is not the paucity of readers but the absence of lively public argument about the novel (and the arts). This absence of lively public argument makes it easy not to care, to pay no attention. The comparison may be absurd, but I am struck by the far higher degree of intelligent intensity a pro football crowd puts into criticizing the team it loves than novel lovers put into criticizing the literary equivalents of a 56–0 defeat.

Defective education cannot be completely to blame for this decline of critical intensity—football fans do not learn their responses in school—but it has a substantial liability. The academic view of the arts is conditioned by a number of forces that tend to drive out criticism, or else to make what is called "criticism" uncritical. One of these is the ethic of

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the sanctity of the creative writer, which holds that art, if it is fair to criticize it at all, must be criticized according to its own internal rules. A second force that works in the same direction is disciplinary specialization. (The ethic of the sanctity of the creative writer is itself the specialization of art.) Specialization imposes the tacit rule that the specialist in any "field" is necessarily a *promoter* of that field. This holds whether your field is Elizabethan lyrics or surrealism. A corollary of the rule is that the nonspecialist has no right to criticize, and if he does so his criticisms count for little.

A bit of enlightened philistinism might change this situation and wake things up. If it is true that novelists have ceased bringing the news about the way people live, or that the news they do bring is largely false, then somebody ought to complain. Teachers could point out the scandal to students—as some already do, but as more would do if they did not fear being laughed at by their colleagues. Nevertheless, there seem to be stirrings of discontent with the long hold of modernist orthodoxies. A lot of this discontent has been expressed in a self-defeating effort to carry these orthodoxies to their ultimate absurdity. But there are signs, also, of a discontent that could go in another direction: toward building a genuine public pressure on the novel and the other arts. I think such critical pressure would be healthier for novelists than the sophisticated, tolerant indifference they have too long enjoyed.

Robert Nisbet

The truth is, I'm not reading any novels, contemporary or other, these days, with the occasional exception of a friend's lapse from journalism, social science, or politics into a *succès de fou*. I take no pleasure or pride in that admission. Not when I think back on what novels of all kinds meant to me from about age eight until perhaps a decade ago. There is still an intellectual-emotional void that is not likely to be filled even by the reading I do take pleasure in at the present time: books of journalism, memoirs, World War I and II history, and biography. I would give a good deal to recapture in any book the kind of fixed excitement, the feeling of not wanting either to drop or to finish the book that went with the reading of Cozzens's *Guard of Honor*, Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men*, and Nabokov's *Lolita*, to name quickly three of the last novels I can remember reading with anything like the enchantment that was once a common experience in my life.

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What accounts for my pathetic state, this alienation from something I loved for so many years? Not, I make bold to assert, impotence or premature senility. If either of these figured, it's unlikely that I would be enjoying as I do right now Jackson Bate on Dr. Johnson, Weinstein on Hiss-Chambers, Theodore White's memoirs, and Farkas's *Journey in North America, 1831*. They're the four I have going now, and when I finish them, I know what the next four and the four after that will be—give or take a title. And not a novel in the lot!

It isn't easy to explain this sad state. It would be different if my love for the novel had been shallow or fitful. But it wasn't. From the time I was captured in early grammar school by the Boy Allies, and turned over to the Motor Boys and to Tom Swift, through some glorious years with Zane Grey, Joseph A. Altsheler, and Edgar Rice Burroughs, to high school years when I first learned about Maugham, Arlen, Dreiser, Dos Passos, Lewis, Cather, and others, and finally to college when I managed the ascent to Conrad, Melville, some Dostoevsky, a lot of Henry James, among others—with the help of two or three first-rate courses at Berkeley by Lehman, Whipple, and Kaun—the novel meant more to me than just about anything except sex fantasies. Nor was I stuffy about it. I felt deprived if I got behind on current best-sellers, and it seems to me *Gone with the Wind* gave me as much thrill as any other novel I was reading in the 1930s. My ambition was quite literally to read every good and great novel ever written. Novelists as a class vied with the best of Hollywood as the aristocracy of America. If it had been possible to skip high school, and even college in the beginning, I would have rejoiced. There would have been more time for novels.

This lasted all through college, graduate school, and out to the Pacific during World War II. My most vivid memory of Saipan, where I spent a year, is not the getting on or off the island but the reading of *Remembrance of Things Past*—all of it. When and where else could I have found the time and inspiration? It was far from the only thing I read that year. I read all of Mann, *The Thibaults*, and a lot else. There were, to supplement what I wrote home for, all those odd-shaped Armed Services paperbacks dumped by the dozens, even hundreds, on every outfit, and among these were some first-rate novels, easily carried around. Even the hurry I was in after the war to catch up, after three years taken from my academic career, didn't have much effect on the volume of my novel reading. I remember feeling disappointed by what World War II (in contrast to the earlier one) yielded in the way of excellent fiction. There was Cozzens's *Guard of Honor*—the best of the lot, I still think—and Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*, but nothing else that seemed even close to the works that came forth in profusion in the 1920s. Nevertheless I read what there was and a lot else, still keeping a

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sharp eye out for the best-seller lists but also still going back for some of the classics I'd missed.

So it went until about 1964. That was when, after escape from a decade of administration (lots of novels read during *those* ten years!), I went back to teaching and especially to the writing of books and articles—at a pace and intensity that for a number of years left no time for the reading of any kinds of books; only the quarrying and mining of them for my own scholarly or polemical writing. Those years were the first in my life, after learning to read, that were largely dry of reading pleasures. I touched a lot of books, but their contents were for mind shaping, not mind pleasing.

Thank heaven, those fevered years are behind me. Now—though still writing, of course—I am back to where I can become entranced by books other than my own. But this return to sanity has not, alas, carried with it the renewal of the novel in my life. And I am at a loss to explain that quirk of fate.

No doubt I could take refuge in the fact that our age is not, by any reckoning, likely to be accounted one of the great periods in the history of the novel. We lack, with but a tiny number of possible exceptions, the presence of first-class, serious, and dedicated novelists who are also household names, even culture heroes as were Hemingway, Dreiser, Lewis, and Cather in the 1920s. The domain of the novel today is divided, it seems to me, between two unequal sets of forces, each unappealing. On the one hand, and in the large majority, are the novelists, so called, who are really in hack service to filmmakers and television producers. For them a book is simply a prelude to a script. Side by side are the weepers all the way to the bank, the very clever if basically talentless crowd pleasers, the Harold Robbinses and Jacqueline Susanns, able to design things on which a first paperback run in the hundreds of thousands can be taken for granted at the outset. And, most recently, the successful journalists and politicians-out-of-office, among others, for whom the novel is a sport, a means of revenge, or self-therapy—with substantial profit almost assured.

On the other hand, across the divide lie much smaller but more formidable enemies of the Great Tradition in novel writing. I mean the closet- and coterie-writers, most of them in tenured residence, whose cocoonlike existence gives them really little to write about except day-to-day trivia and their contemplation of themselves, along with word games designed to draw a friendly pat on the head from some Yale or Rutgers literary critic. The mere thought of writing for the literate public is, for this wretched lot, a nightmare of felt incapacity concealed under languid cynicism or boredom. My guess is that the novel can easily survive the Harold Robbinses, but not so easily the Barths and Barthelmes who are

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utterly without talent and the Mailers and Roths who have it, or once had it, and throw it away as a thing of no consequence.

Yes, it would be possible to account for my alienation from the novel in the terms just stated, but it wouldn't be an honest accounting. For in the first place there are some distinguished exceptions to what I have just said—Bellow, Styron, Percy, and others, who, for all their contemporaneity and individual distinctiveness, belong to the Great Tradition. And second, despite the Herculean efforts of my earlier days, I have by no means exhausted the past. There are a lot of excellent, captivating novels out there from earlier decades and centuries, waiting for me. But I don't stir.

I really don't know why this is the case. All I can do is speculate. Is my individual experience a particle in a cloud still no bigger than a man's hand that portends the kind of ever-widening estrangement from an art form that in the end will condemn the novel to the same extinction that other literary forms in history—epic, ballad, tragedy, and so on—have known, an extinction that would be oblivion were it not for curricular jars in which they get preserved in schools and colleges? If I am correct in my memory of literary history, these other great forms didn't just terminate; they went out slowly—strangled, suffocated, or emasculated by all the imitators and despoilers who took them over, just as the novel shows signs of being taken over by despoilers in our day. I repeat: there are indeed gifted, serious novelists among us. But will our attention to them long survive the increasing degradation of the contemporary novel generally, the degradation that is brought on by the Robbinses on the one side and the Barths on the other, the degradation that has, for the first time in a couple of centuries, left us without household names, culture heroes drawn from the novel?

Yet I am still not satisfied; that is, with respect to my own malaise. After all, just as there were people who lived very comfortably all through the decline and fall of the Roman Empire and through the so-called Dark Ages, so were there people who read well, people whose cherished Homer, Sophocles, Vergil, Ovid, and others were available at some nearby monastery circulating library if not on their own shelves or in their strongboxes.

So I will try one more balloon. Is diminishing interest in the novel in any way connected with individual aging? (I am sixty-five and feeling it.) I well recall a good many older acquaintances and friends back in my novel-absorbing days who quite evidently had read and enjoyed their full share of novels but who were rarely if at all reading novels when I knew them. They were reading the kinds of books I am reading at the present time. Is it possible that a good novel requires more in the way of psychological energies, a strong libido, than do other kinds of writing?

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Or (impudent thought) do we outgrow even the best of fiction? Most of us outgrew—I can think of no other word—tales from Grimm and Andersen, then such thrillers as *The Riders of the Purple Sage*, *The Young Trailers*, and *Tarzan of the Apes*, and finally the pure sexy romance, the Elinor Glyn type of thing. Well, then, isn't it possible that continued aging causes us to outgrow (*not* exhaust or become superior to, but *outgrow*) the novel of whatever stature?

If that speculation of mine enrages the novelists of our time whom I do admire, even if I don't read them, let my punishment be what befell the anti-hero in Waugh's *Handful of Dust:* capture by an elderly, tyrannical bibliomaniac in the Amazon jungle, with all possibility of escape removed, and being forced to read *aloud*, in unending cycles, the complete works of Dickens.

Edward Shils

It is one thing to say that a certain literary genre is no longer practiced; it is another to say that it is poorly practiced. Unlike the short story, the novel is a genre with many practitioners. Most works of the literary imagination are novels. The fluctuations of fashion and the poor quality of many writers who fall short of the standard do not change this fact. A question about the centrality of the novel is a judgment on those who are producing novels today rather than on whether the novel is still an adequate genre for the literary imagination. I think that it is—for those who are serious in their desire to produce works of literary value and who have the imagination, discipline, and verbal facility and sense to do so.

I never looked upon the novel as a source of information about the age in which it was written. For me the novel is an artistic portrayal and an assessment of the course and problems of human life, told in the form of a story in which human beings develop, come into conflict, join in harmony, or move toward their destination, which may be the fulfillment or the frustration of some of their aspirations. It so happens that most of the novels I have read deal with subject matter more or less contemporaneous with the life of the author, and as a result of reading those books I have obtained some ideas about the ways in which people lived in the past and in more recent times in various societies. Nonetheless, to learn about particular societies and about societies in general, I have not depended on novels but on historical works, descriptive and

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statistical accounts, sociological and anthropological monographs, works of travelers and missionaries, memoirs, correspondence, and biographies. Of course, it is likely that part of my impression, let us say, of British life in the 1830s has been formed by reading the novels of Dickens and Disraeli, but I do not think so.

What I have gained from novels is an extension of my imagination about the possibilities of human life and the limitations of human capacities, through being in the presence of characters who face complicated situations—thinking and feeling, yielding and resisting, et cetera. I have gained from novels what one gains from living and from the experience of friends, and by reflecting on my own experience and theirs. A novel in some important respects is like a historical work or a biography, written by its main character or by another person. For me novels have been interpretations of the moral character and problems of human beings. The reading of novels has aided me in the contemplation of human life; they have enlarged the world in which I have lived. When I think of the characters and plots of novels, I do not think of them as being located in a particular period of the history of a particular country. I think of them as part of the wide range of the possibilities of human life. Novels have informed me about the beliefs of their authors whenever and wherever they have lived.

I have read novels with appreciation for the artistic achievements they represent. Vividness of language and imagery, the appropriate richness of vocabulary, the organization of material all affect my appreciation of an author's work. Unfortunately, I have found these qualities lacking in many contemporary novels, but for many years I went on reading them—sometimes one or two a week. After a time, however, I stopped, not because I thought the novel was an exhausted genre, but because the contemporary authors whom I read seemed to lack stylistic discrimination, architectonic discipline, and moral seriousness.

I should add that for many years I read novels by contemporary authors with the intention of gaining some understanding of what people of my time thought and felt (I mean here the authors, and not the characters they portrayed). I used to say—but I did not really mean it as an exclusive account of my motives for reading contemporary novels—that I read them to keep in touch with my contemporaries. By this I did not mean that I read them to obtain documentation about the way they lived, but rather to understand the ways in which their authors were thinking about the world, and not just the contemporary world, in which I was living. I was especially interested, when I read novels of this sort—often undistinguished British, American, and some German or French novels—that I was keeping in touch with the thought of the generation younger than I.

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In the past fifteen years I have ceased reading novels with this justification; I have, in fact, almost ceased to read the novels of newer authors. I still read the works of living writers whom I first began to read many years ago, such as Anthony Powell, Dan Jacobson, Saul Bellow, Graham Greene, R. K. Narayan, Chinua Achebe, and others—mainly authors who began to write twenty or thirty or forty years ago. But the works of those who began to write more recently flit by me like pedestrians on a busy, crowded street.

I think there are several reasons why I have almost ceased to read new novels by authors of whom I know nothing. One reason is that novels have become so expensive that I no longer do as I used to do years ago, which was to go into Blackwell's, or Heffer's, or Better Books when it was on Charing Cross Road every few weeks, and buy two or three novels. I used to do this on Saturday afternoons. I would look forward to reading one of them Saturday evening after dinner, and then finishing it on Sunday morning, when I should have been doing something else. As books became more expensive, I ceased to purchase novels in this way. I also used to go every few months to Harrod's secondhand books department, where they sold off, at a reduced price, titles discarded from their circulating library. In the course of the years I stopped this too, not because I could not afford to buy the books or because it was inconvenient for me to go to Harrod's, but because I found the books uninteresting. The authors were lacking in talent; their books were trivial, slapdash, and commonplace, and they were increasingly pornographic in an arbitrary and gratuitous way. I concluded that I did not wish the intellectual company of those authors.

For nearly forty years I read the reviews of novels in *The Times Literary Supplement*. In that way I could discover what was coming out and benefit from the preliminary sifting which those reviews provided. Even when my desire to read new novels slackened, I continued to read reviews but found little there to quicken my desire. I also used to read the reviews of new novels in two other London papers, the *Sunday Times* and the *Observer*, but gave them up about ten years ago. In the United States I found no comparable source of guidance in any publication; the critics seemed to me to participate in the foibles of the authors; hence both authors and their reviewers discouraged my flagging desire to "keep up."

I cannot account for the decline in the quality of novels. True, there has been much propaganda about the "death of the novel," but I cannot see why that should be happening. The exercise of the imagination and the casting of the consequence of that exercise into the form of a story about the development and fate of human beings is still a major in-

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tellectual activity, and literary men have not yet created a substitute for it. It is difficult for me to agree that the human race has lost its concrete imagination. Any author who understands his characters, who is the master of the language in which he is writing, and who has an ear for conversation, a sense of the coherence and inconsistencies of human conduct, and some perspective on the courses that human lives take should be able to write a respectable novel. Let him tell what he imagines, but let him also discipline himself and never think about being "original" or "innovative." Let him think about what he has done in each successive draft of the book, and above all let him cease any preoccupation with being "with it." Let him not be afraid of being old-fashioned. . . . But perhaps this is idle counsel to a generation of writers who think that they must go their contemporaries one better on the downward path.

I have the impression that those who write novels nowadays do not take the profession of literature seriously. They wish to write about their sensations, and they wish to exhibit their own experiences, which have neither been meditated upon nor formed. Again, I cannot say why this has happened, but to explain it would be to explain an important part of the decomposition of morale in the literary section of the intellectual class.

I do not miss contemporary novels. I have given up my concern to be in touch with my contemporaries in a more intimate way. I see and hear enough of their conduct from other sources such as my own observations, the newspapers, learned periodicals, and works on "social science"; there is a limit to which I can stand the company of bores and moral flibbertigibbets, even though I have an obligation to them as contemporaries. Anyone who reads contemporary novels for a truthful picture of recent society is almost willfully making himself a victim of misinformation. Since I did not read novels in the first place to gain a sense of contemporary society, but rather for an extension of my view of the world beyond what I could imagine, I find nineteenth- and early twentieth-century novels far superior, both in extending the range of my imagination and in augmenting its richness and substance.

I have not ceased to read novels. Since my reading of contemporary novels has diminished almost to zero, I have again read most of the works of Dickens, Eliot, Peacock, Flaubert, Tolstoy, Stendhal, Dostoevsky, Turgenev, Couperus, Conrad, Wharton, Melville, James, and many other novelists of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. I find that to read once more books which I first read in high school and as an undergraduate, and even as recently as twenty years ago, is almost the same as reading them for the first time. They still fascinate me and give me very great pleasure.

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Archetypes

ELÉMIRE ZOLLA

AN ARCHETYPE IS WHAT CAN PERMANENTLY ORDER objects into sets, gather together emotions, and direct thoughts.

Contact with an archetype cannot be revealed in the language of everyday experience; it requires exclamatory and idiomatic expressions; it is always attended by some measure of entrancement. But a sense of archetypes can also dawn on ordinary minds, caught in the web of manifold, benumbing appearances. To these minds the encounter will be a startling, fearsome reversal of their stiff, fragile, thoughtless, clumsy habits and persuasions, of their previous unthinking, unstable archetypal balance. Such minds may blunder into archetypes as they grope their way in the maze of material causes. Or a slighted archetype may grip them all of a sudden: love may clench them when they are playing the wanton; fury seize them on a trifling occasion; despair overcome them precisely when status is ensured, duty performed, affection secured. They may think they have settled all a nation's problems, satisfied its needs, furthered its interests—and somebody turns up reversing archetypes: "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country," and the too down-to-earth, too sensible, too healthy, too self-seeking voters will become sacrifice-eager, danger-courting, entranced dreamers. Many times it is in sleep, or with strange slips, unintended acts, that neglected archetypes visit their first slight punishments on one who has dared ignore them. Many then exclaim with Hamlet:

> O God! I could be bounded in a nut-shell, and count myself a king of infinite space; were it not that I have bad dreams.

In society at large, a neglect of archetypes will bring about the appearance of strange and estranged minorities on far-out, unpleasant fringes. The warning is sounded; if it go unheeded, the brunt will be paralyzing, the archetype will carry the victims off in a swoon.

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Man needs axioms for his thinking, food for his body, trance for his psyche. Trance means going beyond *(trans ire)* into the archetypal world. When one grazes it, at shows or in dalliance, it gives a mild thrill; but that is not enough, only panic will do. It is man's lot to lose himself periodically in the forest of archetypes. This happens in dreams, which reveal the actual archetypal purport of everyday existence. In dreams one sees the nonsensical farce of one's involvement in appearances, identification with semblances, entanglement with reminiscences, because once sleep has sent the psyche adrift, forms and images are arranged according to their archetypal import alone. So one comes up against what is inescapable. One is exposed to it naked, and fearing, or wondering. But dreaming is not enough. Men cannot survive without periodically disappearing, fully awake, into an archetype. They need to feel carried away in broad daylight by the impending archetype. They feel a call from the Primordial Dyad or Symmetry, and fall to mating; they want to be dazzled by the Emergence-of-the-Unit-of-Measure, and rush to gamble; they are attracted into the varying significance that brawling, drinking, dancing, banqueting, haranguing can assume. Sensible social arrangements in certain groups provide for periodic sessions of spirit possession, which afford a totally satisfying surrender to the needed archetype. Originally, dances so increased their tempo, and singing grew so hoarse, that possession followed—as among Vedda shamans in Sri Lanka. Also, at Yaqui and Taoshian festivals the capers and the leaps result in trances. Originally, among South American shamans, smoking brought them to the point of swooning and hallucination.

An archetype is generally acted out in the form of a recital. Most people have a peculiar mythic event, a dream sequence that they feel compelled to go through over and over again in a state of slight intoxication, like children absorbed in their game. The most telling and graphic rendition of this truth can be found in Genêt's plays. His Universal Brothel is the archetypal social institution, where everybody's personal arch-dream is catered to.

Most people are struck by an archetype—by its mythical incarnation in an event—at least once in their lifetime, and after that all they can do is circle round and round it. They are literally enchanted, bewitched, doomed to eternal circumambulation, and it is incredibly difficult to find the right disenchanting chant for them. Whatever happens is either crammed into the general picture of their obsession or is allowed to flit past unheeded.

It is not only in Victorian novels that an existence full of apparent change and adventure may hinge on the childhood or adolescent memory of a smart or of a slight, or of a mere snub, or of some puerile

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disappointment or attraction or commitment. The squaring of the imaginary account, the paying off of the stale score, is the very gist of such lives, and yet the Victorian writer knew that he had the reader safely on the stubborn hero's side. It is considered natural that the stunted soul shall roam the globe, engage in the wildest enterprises, and then come back to some funny native village to call quits. "Changing place changes stars" runs a Jewish saying, but it falls on deaf ears with people whose stunned psyches, wherever the body may be, remain glued to the spot of their encounter with the archetype. The soul has been transformed into a pillar of salt.

When the primal paralyzing scene is buried away in early infancy, and not even remembered, the victim is like the man in the experiment Bernheim was fond of showing his pupils, the youthful Freud among them. The man was put under hypnosis and told to carry out some silly action later on. When the time came, he did what he had been ordered, with a puzzled air, but finding some rational excuse to cover up his behavior. An archetypal encounter has implanted such an order in most people, and they waste away their lives, obeying as best they may and with the most strained justifications. Sometimes they inherit the pattern from their parents. They are never awakened, not even to be crippled and mesmerized.

The Ideal Universal Brothel provides a straight man to feed each client his lines in his particular farce. The official who has slipped back into his school uniform will get his spanking; the colonel who has donned priestly vestments will hear the desired confession. If some such Brothel is not providing an outlet, the archetype will assert itself anyway; mouthings, grimaces, nervous tics will devastate the deprived one's face. They cannot be stopped: whatever the circumstances, he must go on frantically playing his part over and over in the archetypal mythic scene in which those movements are required. Stutters, compulsions, repetitions, the trite mistakes made over and over again, expletives, redundancies in general are signs that the person, whatever the cost, is trying to act out the archetypal dream, his or her curse.

As Hopkins phrased it:

> Self-yeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see
> The lost are like this, and their scourge to be
> As I am mine, their sweating selves . . .

Redundancy is the key that locks them in, and could eventually also unlock them.

What a man feels compelled pointlessly to voice gives his game away. All oath taking, swearing, all the mad mythology of invectives, all the moronic sexual metaphors are avowals of obsessions. With such victims

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of mythic compulsions, whether they are honest, law-abiding zombies or reasonably neurotic patients, it has been suggested that the cure might be for them to repeat untiringly the questions: "Who am I? What *is* I?" This might lead to the realization that personal identity is a delusion, that one is not one but many, until at last nonpersonal awareness, a witnessing anonymous center, is firmly established: a nonpersonal identity which is cosmic, sheer being.

If this is not achieved, what difference does it make that it is you or somebody else, with another name, that goes through your body's mechanical set of motions? They are the result of social myths, of conditionings you have never even inquired about. You or somebody else—it makes no difference whatever.

To gain this point of view, one should pay a visit to Genêt's Brothel, which Blake styled "Halls of Los":

> All things acted on Earth are seen in the bright Sculptures of
> Los's Halls and every Age renews its powers from these Works,
> With every pathetic story possible to happen from Hate or
> Wayward Love and every sorrow and distress is carved here,
> Every affinity of Parents, Marriages and Friendships are here
> In all their various combinations wrought with wondrous Art.

The same key can unlock; let a man shed his redundancies and he will be a buoy in the sea of archetypes. He will view the Halls of Los detachedly; the Universal Brothel will appear to him a collection of curios.

The temporary satisfaction he got out of his little act in this or that chamber of the Universal Brothel was a tame affair by comparison—nothing but a temporary release from pressure, the daily dose of the addict, while a realization of the game of archetypes behind it all will confer a sense of release, of peace and ecstasy only inferior to the full peace and bliss of unity, to the realization of cosmic Oneness.

A novel of Ouspensky tells the story of a man who is expelled from school, loses an inheritance, a job, a fiancé, and begs a magician for help. The magician consents to give him a new lease on life and projects him backward in time, to his earlier years. The man makes the same mistakes, one by one, all over again—even though he now knows each time what the outcome will be. The old, unchanging compulsion is irresistible, so he finds himself back in the magician's presence. He finally discovers that the only answer is to shed his silly self. He looks at the cats in a Moscow lane and realizes the meaning of the impersonal here-and-now.

The average human being clings madly to the rags of his "personality"; in them he drapes himself for the monotonous, tiresome, dreary performance of the one archetypal myth which is his personal equation.

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If ever he realized the here-and-now, he would also see the myth as if from outside himself; then he would heave a deep sigh of relief, like Sindbad after having shaken the mean old man off his shoulders. He would then be granted the realization of what archetypes are—what Keats called a fellowship with essences, a "sort of oneness" that brings freedom and renewal. But such an enthrallment, Keats adds, is "self-destroying"; it is barred to the multitudes who refuse to let go of their selves.

Yet everybody knows about archetypes. There isn't a village where you are not reminded of them, at least comically, by statues, by decorations, by buildings designed not to provide shelter but to symbolize. You cannot handle a banknote without being stared at by them: they hang on walls, dangle on chests, are worn on fingers. Everybody serves archetypes, but ever so few understand what they are. A shaman once risked his life to become all archetypes—to impersonate them, not as tranced and possessed, unconscious devotees might, but as an actor glowingly committed though fully aware of the performance. This enabled him to *use* archetypes instead of remaining their plaything. He became the lawgiver, and was no longer a law-abiding serf or a tormented law-breaker.

Since the realization of the nature of archetypes is a rare feat, naming them presents one of the biggest problems in language. How can their necessarily unconscious, submerged part be identified? It should be done through poetry. Or by a sacred dumbshow dancer—moving, say, his hand in circles around his heart and showing all things issuing thence. Some think that the naming should be spiced with suffering, enhanced by powerful hallucination. Certainly it cannot be done without emotion, but the emotion must be symbolically transposed and clarified; it should become an evocation through symbol, as Yeats explained in *Dramatis Personae*. All emotions are event-raising evocations. Do not fierce haters seem to generate violence outside their control? Thanks to symbols, emotions are channeled. A meditation on sunlight creates what the sun symbolizes; "an emotion produces a symbol—sensual emotion dreams of water, for instance, just as a symbol produces emotion." The assumption follows that an archetype is impending when a symbol and an emotion coalesce. Meditation on symbols can teach one to sense the plexuses.

The whole art of advertisement, and heraldry as well, is based on this connection.

Grasping the role of archetypal evocations in politics is a helpful exercise—noticing how each generation seems to get stuck in some primal political scene, after which it is boxed-in, incapable of renewed attention. The categories within which events are apprehended seem to have been fixed once and for all by the generations who went through

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the successive European wars or revolutions. Those generations were crippled psychically, never outgrowing their single frame of reference: the pattern of alliances, the stock characterizations. Whatever may happen has to be referred back to the primal scene. The game must never change. Practical statesmen well know that nothing stays put, but they must condescend to the old linguistic identifications to get through with business.

These stultifying games are side-acts in a vaster show, in which nations are engaged for centuries at a stretch, after some great mythmaker has set a scenario, called down one or two archetypes, which thenceforth will blind men to all the remaining components of life—to the point of political color blindness, fanaticism. To the redundancies in gestures, the expletives in language, the tics that testify to the private mythical acts interminably rehearsed, are corresponding analogous political quirks. In fact it is easier for a man to disengage from his private obsessions than to see through the painted veil of political fables, especially when these are presented as history or as general interest. The interest is not of the generality as such, but of its unifying myth. History would not cohere if mythical trends were not read into it.

The extent of political delusions can be gauged by how easily, in political disputations, people surrender to phrases such as, "If everybody thought or/and did as you do . . . ," whose validity should rest on sober evidence that the culprit's thoughts or deeds carry substantial weight in general affairs. When reasoning is blurred to the extent that such a phrase is taken seriously, it is a sign that an archetype is inflating the ego.

The archetypes that rule political life change slowly along the millennia. It is of paramount importance to realize this if one is to understand the workings of archetypes in general.

European history is a fugue built on a handful of mythical themes. It all started with the terrific story of the founding of Rome, a name sometimes interpreted as Love, *Amor* in reverse. On a vestal virgin Mars sires the twins Romulus and Remus. They are abandoned in a trough on the Tiber and end up under a fig tree, where a she-wolf suckles them and a woodpecker feeds them, perhaps with the sap of the tree. A shepherd and his wife, Faustus and Acca Larentia, act as foster parents to the two, who become warriors and avenge their dead mother. (In some versions, all woes are due to a wicked uncle, often the main personage in matriarchal societies.) The warrior twins found a city on the hills surrounding the fig tree, but omens decree that Romulus shall be the true founder. Remus, from the Aventine, spots six vultures, but Romulus later descries twelve from the Palatine and thus wins the contest. He proceeds to plow the circuit of Rome and when Remus oversteps it, he kills him for the sacrilege. The city becomes a sanctuary for the stragglers of the region,

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and Romulus turns them into a disciplined fighting force. The most experienced of them he appoints to a senate. Then he disappears, ascending to heaven.

Bands of nomad warrior youths of a Romulian kind were known in ancient Persia. On their banner a dragon stood out against a black background. They practiced, according to Wikander, a form of ritual intercourse with prostitute-priestesses and sought to maintain themselves in a state of rabid intoxication, drinking *haoma* and identifying themselves with the dragon-slayer. They were called "two-footed wolves." They differed from the Romulian squads because of their knightly interest in the protection of maidens. Otherwise, points of contact with the archaic Persian institution can be found at all points of the Romulian myth. The fig tree was sacred to Venus and Dionysus the intoxicator; fig juice fermented could replace *haoma*. There were fraternities devoted to fig secrets. "Sycophants" were divulgers ("figs" in Greek are *sykòi*) of fig lore, which was linked with crime, wolves, and ritual lewdness. In Greece, criminals expelled from towns wore necklaces of figs. Roman matrons, with their maids, celebrated the fig festival of Goaty Juno, in which they touched with fig twigs—like Tantric devotees with lingams—men's sex organs and their own.

Among Roman youths there was the fraternity of wolves (*luperci*). Cicero talks about wolfish brothers who enact something belonging to times before the onset of humaneness and law. At their festival, which fell in February, they killed a goat, touched their foreheads with its blood, like consigning themselves to death, and then wiped it off with wool *(februm)*. After this they ran naked (the Persian counterparts made a point of fighting in the nude), plying women with freshly cut strips of the hairy goat's hide. They rounded the Palatine, their center being the she-wolf's den *(lupercal)*. The she-wolf of the legend had lost her cubs (*lup* in Etruscan means death). The she-wolf demon in Babylon was death, especially that of sucklings. It is death's milk the twins Romulus and Remus drank; they belong to the world of devouring demons. But *lupa* in Latin also means a prostitute. Acca Larentia, the twins' foster mother, is described as a loose woman in certain versions, and her name connects her with the dead *(lares)*. All this points to a roaming guild of fig-tree priestesses devoted to cults of death and sex. The leaders of woodpeckers' guilds in Humbria imitated the knocks of the bird's beak against the bark of trees with a hammer of fecundity. The sap was fermented.

Twins have appeared horrifying to many tribes all over the world, so they were often, at least one of them, put to death. They were discord and doubt (*dubium*, dual being) incarnate. Everything sinister is present in the Romulian tale: wolfishness, lewdness, lawlessness, the marshaling

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of the riffraff, and at the same time judicial murder, the strictest of law enforcements. The number of Romulus, since he is added to Larentia's family of twelve, is thirteen. He appears to be the equivalent of the English countryside Tommy with his Bess, a man in disguise—a springtime lightning god. He founds his city on the twenty-first of April, 754 B.C. He resembles Cain, the founder of cities, who became untouchable thanks to murder and bore a bloody sign on his forehead like a *lupercus*.

The tale serves many good mythic turns. All lively boys dream that they are bastards of a high-ranking kind. Everything that lives on the fringe of society is alluring; the story holds the unchanging appeal of cowboy, pirate, and criminal stories, with dark hints at more and worse. It represents society in the raw, at its criminal inception, untouched by family romance, simplified by main force, wary about omens, and shorn of pity. It is a barracks myth, the consecration of the ruthless bully who, however roughly, provides for his comrades. The deities are Mars, and in the background wild Venus, and Vulcan—connected with the vestals. Mars will further shower his blessings by dropping his shields on the Capitol. They signify protection; when struck, they make a warlike din; they catch the sun's reflection and blind whoever dares raise his head in front of them. Their concavity serves as a stretcher; on their convex side, leaders are carried in triumph.

Under such a thirteenish and dual archetype of dire manly comradeship nobody will dare show anything but sternness, punctiliousness, curtness, levelheadedness, endurance, reliance on ritual and signs, rough solidarity.

A strong archetypal girdle for the city—which had, however, something less sinister to fall back on: the myth of the Pythagorean king Numa, the sage who sought inspiration from a nymph. But this story always took a back seat. Rome was essentially Romulian.

Barracks may look strong, but they fall prey to rivalries and internal coups. Comradeship works both ways: it can make command easy or it can favor mutiny. Either a good impersonator of Romulus keeps the rugged mass spellbound with a display of all the ingredients of the myth, or the element of equality in comradeship comes to the fore and the mythical energy is channeled into comitial rule. At the end of the Republic, the myth was fraying out. Whoever among the Romulian impersonators got deepest into debt with the bankers was bound to become the chief, but to stay on he needed a new myth, besides and above the old soldierly one.

If Antony, who identified with Dionysus, had prevailed, the Augustan myth would have been that of the double crown of the land of the Nile, a most time-hallowed story known in Latium well before Rome:

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the Sun becomes a human ruler with a claim to whatever land is blessed by the rays of his heavenly double. But it was Augustus who carried the day. He started his archetypal maneuvering by becoming supreme pontiff. Augustus took over and had the myth all squared out, and Vergil, the most melodious of poets, turned it into verse for him. He, like Romulus, was descended from Aeneas, the Trojan prince. He went back even before Romulus. He identified his destiny with that of Troy, the great defeated city of the Mediterranean world. Since Greece was under the Roman yoke, accounts were neatly settled. Troy had been avenged by her sons. They had endured through the centuries because they were one with Venus, Mars's Shakti, who could be wolfish and simple but was essentially gentle and courtly. The Imperial Father myth took precedence over the soldierly myth; it offered a more settled yin-yang balance. It also enjoyed the advantage of incorporating the theme of "the return of the repressed"—a defeated race warily preparing its comeback through the ages, with its arcana, its esoteric political secrets passed patiently on from father to son, along with the faith in the gods, who would never forsake their trusting devotees. The world was Rome's because of the primal right of revenge and because of the manifest assistance of Venus (and Mars). Just in case the Egyptian myth might have something to it, Rome was studded with obelisks imported from the shores of the Nile, to bring down into her soil whatever archetypal imperial energy might be had through them.

The West has never shaken off the Augustan myth of empire which took over the powerful "Roman name," *nomen romanum.* Whatever else the various emperors tried out in the way of archetypes failed to stick. Nero toyed with Persian imports; since Persia had developed an imperial myth as powerful as Egypt's, he sought a consecration by Magi. Other emperors called down various Syrian combinations, but the Rommulian-Augustan, Mars-Venus combination held good.

When Christ's disciples changed the psychic atmosphere, the old formula was not discarded; Constantine decided to improve on it, making it dual, as the Egyptian settlement had been. He staged the most dazzling of pageants in A.D. 330, near Troy—at the opposite end and on the other side of the Straits, and there founded the second Rome, Constantinople, which was actually Rome coming back to the ancient shores, to where the whole story had started. All the magic relics of the Capitol were brought here amid these other Seven Hills, but with them manna from Israel's medicine pouch, since it was felt that Christ was entitled to take over all that magic too. On the top of a column rising in the center of the city stood a statue of the emperor as the Sun, and the rays around his head were made of the nails of the Holy Cross. The new,

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the second, Rome was Troy, Golgotha, and Capitol all in one.

When the old Rome fell to Odoacer, the barbarian king deposed the last Western emperor, conveniently named Romulus Augustulus, and sent off to the only remaining emperor the insignia of authority. So Rome was one once more. Christianity had reinforced the mythic scenario, and the emperor's old pontifical role was now enlarged; he presided over the ecumenical councils, was called God's "icon" or "archetype," like a real pharaoh. His fortune manifested God's Word, according to inscriptions.

But Rome was still there, the original scenario. And its bishops were busy avocating slowly and slyly—or so it seemed in Byzantium—the pontifical imperial role. They avoided claiming other, secular powers, preferring to stay emperor-makers, instead of simple emperors. This was one esoteric point they proved they had mastered. The other was the knowledge that written names control the things named, and their Curia specialized in drawing up documents, something as important as the privilege of the mint that nobody dared deny the Roman emperor of the East. (The bezant outlasted even Byzantium; it took a long time before the triumphant Arabs coined money of their own.) When the Roman bishops, by now pontiffs, decided that they felt safer with a territory of their own, all they had to do was draw up a donation for the required domain bearing the signature of Constantine himself. When the Muslim fleet attacked the second Rome, the bishop of the first Rome thought he saw his chance to reject imperial supremacy, but he paid for the mistiming with his life. It was only two and a half centuries later that one of his successors could safely crown Charlemagne the Holy Roman Emperor of the West. The Frankish chief seems to have protested to the very end of his days his ignorance of what the crafty pontiff was up to during the ceremony of Christmas night in the year 800, bestowing on him the secular power but keeping for himself the pontifical authority, the very first that Augustus had secured. Dante was still indignant after four hundred years: how could another emperor be crowned when the lawful one was reigning in Byzantium? The Augustan myth was now alive in a Western version, but with the pontifical authority distinct, claiming the function of *Cakravartin*, he-who-turns-the-wheel-of-destiny, and empire. The Western empire was less stable in regard to myths than was the Roman empire of the East, where the relation between church and emperor was neatly marked out and not, as in the West, wavering between the temptation of a full seizure of power on the part of the pontiff—a temptation that nearly carried away Gregory VII—and a practice of cautiously tipping the balance of power between the emperor and the intermediary bodies, using the spiritual weapons to favor the lower orders if necessary.

Otto was the only emperor who would not wholly remit the pontifical

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rights he felt were due him, and who had bells dangling from his garments like a biblical pontiff. Emperors did not impinge on pontifical power, but helped those forces that might counter it, such as the doctrines of utter ecclesiastical poverty favored by the mendicant orders, and even downright heresy. The whole history of the Middle Ages hinges on the various interpretations allowed by the mythical setting that Augustan poetry and statecraft had framed.

Dante thought that the Roman Empire had been patently justified by God when He chose to send His Son on earth at the very beginning of imperial rule, when Rome had just cleared the way for evangelization by unifying the world, so to speak. Christ was thereby a Roman. The Church should be restricted by a strong imperial hand. This was the way of Byzantium. Dante placed his hopes in the Emperor Henry VII. The emperor also enjoyed the spiritual assistance of the German knightly poet Wolfram von Eschenbach, who reformulated the myth of the Holy Grail, neatly splicing the old Celtic stories with Persian imperial mythic lore; in the context a ritual of the Holy Grail was envisaged whose main elements were those sections of the Mass that the Roman pontiffs had discarded and Byzantium had preserved.

The imperial side was that of all the great poets of Italy. Petrarch placed *his* hopes in the emperor of his time, Charles VII, and also in the Roman rabble-rouser Rienzi, who seemed about to bring the Roman people back to life as a political entity. Ariosto rested his hopes in Charles V, whom Titian painted as Marcus Aurelius. The last showdown between the emperor and the pontiff took place with the sack of Rome, Lutheran soldiery doing the job. Campanella sought to replace the emperor with a king of Spain or of France, and ended by finally preparing the scenario for Louis XIV. Giordano Bruno at one time placed his hopes in the English crown.

England may seem rather insular, but its archetypes are not altogether different from those of Rome. When the Normans overran the country, the Celts from Brittany who followed them were actually impersonating the archetypal story of the long-delayed revenge of the defeated. The Celtic minstrels provided the Norman monarchy with the myth of King Arthur, who had taken over after Rome had abandoned the island. It became the Tudor knightly myth, and to add strength to it the Augustan myth was duplicated, the founding of London being attributed to a relative of Aeneas, Brut. The Constantinian trick was added: Joseph of Arimathea had brought over for the Arthurian magic bounty at Glastonbury the most precious of Christian relics. The mythical apparel stood the last Tudors and the first Stuart in good stead when they had to rely on their own mythical prestige against the powerful onslaught of the slighted Roman Curia. Spenser, Sidney, and Jonson

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wove a mantle of melodious verse for the monarchy with all that rich mythical spool. John Dee added the motif of predestined seapower and of colonial rights inherited from Welsh kings. This was one of the rare new touches in history, though it was actually an appendage to the Celtic fable and to the imperial motif now also coming to the fore in England. It was blended with the preceding settings so well that Blake saw Brut the Trojan in one of his visions:

> Hear ye the voice of Brutus: "The flowing waves
> Of time come rolling o'er my breast, he said;
> And my heart labours with futurity:
> Our sons shall rule the empire of the sea."

Giordano Bruno had come over to see what could be made of the idea of empire in London, and the Rosicrucians decided to transfer the Holy Roman Empire to an English prince, but the idea of somebody more or less boasting of a homeopathic drop of Trojan blood, back on the throne of the Romans, was ill fated.

England started now on a very insular course, with the Stuarts leaning on the newfangled, shaky myth of a restored Davidic monarchy of neo-Israelites. It was swept away by a formidable new myth of revenge, a "return of the repressed." The Saxons had been offstage long enough, so the Parliamentarians rallied to the myth of a return of hardy Saxon democracy and accordingly reshaped the story of England—with the Witenagemot at the beginning, the Magna Charta bringing it back to life, habeas corpus crowning its return and crushing Norman insolence for good. Walter Scott well knew how to exploit the story. But when Cromwell wanted to assert his eminence, he was forced to cull something out of the Bible and was no better at it than the uninspired Stuart divines, with his myth of the judges. Ever since, an even balance has been kept, with the Cavaliers harping on Arthurian myths spiced with Augustan–Roman Empire reminiscences, and the Parliamentarians thriving on Saxon democracy. The whole imperial venture was under the star of Rome. (Look up the inscription under Boadicea's statue when you cross Westminster Bridge.) Kipling drew all the parallels he could, and the question of why Rome fell was always in the minds of Englishmen with an imperial inclination, as though the real historical problem were not the opposite: how Rome could have stood so long.

In *Heart of Darkness* Conrad has Marlow deliver a rambling evocation of all that the estuary of the Thames suggests in the way of archetypes, and Rome comes to the fore:

> The Romans first came here nineteen hundred years ago—the other day. . . . Light came out of this river since—you say Knights? Yes. . . . We live in the

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flicker—may it last as long as the old earth keeps rolling! [As for Empire, it] is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much. What redeems it is the idea only . . . not a sentimental pretence, but an idea: and an unselfish belief in the idea—something you can set up, and bow down before, and offer a sacrifice to.

The Augustan dream and the ecclesiastic challenge to its fulfillment were all that Germany was ever treated to, while France, the melting pot of Celts, Greeks, Latins, Germans, Scandinavians, saw the new myth of nationhood emerge. By the thirteenth century jurists had coined a paradox: the king is emperor in his kingdom, and Paris is another Rome. The ingredients in the fabrication of the mystical body's idiosyncratic identity were remote: the Norman cult of Saint Michel and the Celtic worship of womanhood (France was *douce*). Both were to coalesce in Joan of Arc, who also satisfied people's need to feel arch-Catholic and at the same time at odds with Rome. Shakespeare felt there was an affinity between the "voices" that guided Joan and the visions of Muhammad. Previously the crusades had helped forge national unity the same way that their warlike expeditions had conflated Islam. The Capets stood by during the process with a medicine pouch ready, their secret coronation ointment in its special vial.

The surge of nationhood brought back to life the most archaic and Platonic of political myths, the triad: the three estates of the realm—clergy, aristocracy, and burghers, over which the king and his crafty lawyers presided. By 1302 the realm was recognized as a corporate or "mystical" body, a person, whom the king represented. Its enemies were the empire (the Battle of Bouvines disposed of that) and the pontiffs, whose resistance was curbed, so it seems, with the slap of one of the king's lawyers; the papal residence was transferred to Avignon, the Templars burned at the stake in Place Dauphine. The pull of the older myths, however, proved too strong in the long run, even for the "sweet" nation of checks and balances combined with strong regal centralization. Ronsard felt the need to bring in Troy, and Francion, Trojan founder of the Franks; and with Louis XIV, the king actually became emperor-like in his imperial palace; his police corps outflanked the intermediary bodies as the Augustan *fiscus* had done with the old Republican institutions of Rome. So much so that when Louis XVI called on the three estates again, a change of archetype had also taken place among the constituents, who were no longer "the good people of France"—whatever that might mean. The most forceful of them were haunted by the Romulian myth. The work the Jacobins did with archetypes was enormous: they trimmed all the insignia off the old national myth, dismissed the angelic presences; and for all this they substituted, as Disraeli was to say, Romulus. They hacked away not only at statues and

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paintings but also at the calendar. They altered the musical scales to make sure that the tune would change. (Hobbes had warned against overcultivating Roman history.) Nationhood was scooped empty and filled with a Romulian content. The concoction proved devastating; it spread to all of Europe, where people started noticing their national identity, and in Germany Germanic mythology was added to the brew. This last, however, was an old Roman trick. Tacitus had seen how the element of primeval Germanic hardihood could be grafted on the Romulian mythic stock.

Romulian Paris hardly imagined that it was giving the fatal cue, as always, to its Augustan successor, who promptly followed. Napoleon's staging was so breathtaking that the old dynasty was thrown out of Augustan business for good. He even made sure that this time the pontiff played no tricks, as he had with Charlemagne a thousand years before. The mistake had been to let the pontiff place the crown on the neo-imperial locks, thereby asserting his *Cakravartin* function. Napoleon took the crown in his own hands and placed it on his head himself. Now he was the Roman emperor of the West, with Paris full of holies stolen from Rome. He knew from the ancient script that he had to turn his attention to a rival Eastern Rome. In 1453 the second Rome had fallen to the Turks after the pontifical first Rome had crippled it, but its myth had continued—a third Rome was announced in Moscow in 1530. Against this third Rome, the first pontifical Rome had already mounted an assault by her Teuton knights, and later by the Jesuit-inspired conspiracy, which was smashed by Boris Godunov as the first onslaught had been repulsed by (Saint) Alexander Nevsky.

The Romanovs—ironic name—for centuries looked for an opening to get (back, in the mythical sense) to the Bosporus. Napoleon checked the czar's (the Caesar's) moves in that direction at the Tilsit conference, and whispered to his secretary that Constantinople meant world empire. After a long time, Moscow's obsession about the Bosporus came to the fore in exactly the same terms as during the twentieth-century talks between Molotov and Ribbentrop.

Napoleon was so keen on arranging things faultlessly that he wrested out of the emperor of Austria the by-then mock title Holy Roman Emperor. He did it in a neatly juridical way that foreclosed all such Hapsburg claims for good.

That the democratic tradition in France should be rooted in Romulian myth, while the English tradition was Saxon, has made all the difference in the recent history of the two nations. It also explains why as a whole, despite Carlyle's efforts, the new myth of Germanic fortitude, concomitant with, or opposed to, the Romulian brand, won some hear-

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ing in myth-starved nineteenth-century Germany but never gained a footing in England.

The nineteenth century saw the spread of the French Romulian-and-national myth all over Europe. It also reached Italy, which for centuries had been immersed in the myth of the fatherly pontiff caring for his flock (also politically) and in that of empire, with a slender trickle of the Romulian added. The Italian risorgimento hymns are a mixture of the "return of the repressed" motif (in Garibaldi's hymns tombs are agape and the dead are on their feet again) and of the Romulian mood strangely twisted around to suit the situation (the national anthem runs: "Italy has clasped on her head Scipio's helmet, because God created her slave to Rome"; the pace is iambic).

Disraeli, an arch-connoisseur of archetypal shifts and balances, foresaw in 1870 exactly what was fated to happen in myth-craving Germany (nowhere else could a grand myth shaper like Wagner appear) and in mythically unstable Italy (which is constantly tempted to give up myth-mongering and fling herself into the arms of some mythically well-assured foreign power). Disraeli warned fifty years too early that the Aryan Germanic myth, with a eugenic twist, would cause an upheaval in German minds and that Italy would try to bring Caesar, the Augustan myth proper, back to life.

If this kind of archetypal calculation had been tried on Russia, it would have clearly emerged that the two myths which dominated the country from its beginning were bound to clash: the dream of the village community, heathen or at least heretically Christian, and the third-Rome Byzantine-Orthodox dream, which at one time even included a fable about the blood of Augustus's brother running in the veins of Rjurik, the Viking founder of czarism.

After a brief resurgence of the first myth, the second safely took over, to the point that—having to face again the problem of the first: the wild force of the peasantry that had been kept at bay with serfdom—it resorted to the equivalent law on passports for interior travel.

Out of the whole archetypal history of Europe, the "return of the repressed" archetype emerges as the most important of all. When the pagan deities, Jupiter and all the Olympians, took over in poetry, painting, and archetypal imagination in general, no sooner were they in state than their magnetism started declining, and those whom they had dethroned loomed large in the imagination of poets, painters, and inspired reformers. Saturn, Prometheus, Astraea emerge in the late Rosicrucian writings and dominate the Romantic mind. As the Augustan myth was being revived by Napoleon—and by English imperialism beyond the Channel—the Romulian myth was gathering unprecedented strength all over Europe, returning finally to its very origins: an appeal to

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the stragglers, to the disinherited, to all those living on the far fringes of society that they gather under a harsh leadership; very often this was a duet of chiefs poised one against the other, and with a plenum Senate appointed to fill the measure of resemblance. Saturn's sickle will undercut Vulcan's, or Thor's, or the woodpecker fraternity's hammer of fecundity. Meanwhile the other myths—of a *Cakravartin* church ready to step into secular concerns, of nationhood, and of Saxon democracy—bide their time. So few are the ruling archetypes when it comes to global political justification. The hieratic Egyptian system and the myth of Alexander end by falling into the Augustan pattern; the Spartan model is absorbed into the Romulian; the Athenian into the Saxon. When Europeans are confronted with loose, easy political systems of shamanistic peoples, sometimes entirely based on seership, they compulsively construe them as variants of the savage Romulian model.

It is extraordinary how the magic circle woven round political imagination coerces minds and can appear unchangeable. Nothing seems to be conceivable beyond the few appeals that can be classed (if one prefers to use the classical sevenfold planetary scale) as the Romulian junction of Saturn and Mars, the Augustan combination of Apollo and Jupiter with Venus, the checks and balances of Mercury, the moon of nationhood. One additional cluster sticks out of the frame: the Saturnian vision of an impending social or cosmic earthquake and of an ensuing redemptive renewal. Certain religious systems incorporate its appeal, and apply to the "redeemed" world the adjectives and the imagery that are associated with metaphysical experience. This is true especially of Zoroastrianism, hence of Shî'a Islam and of Judaism. It seems to have been part and parcel of early Christianity—the Book of Revelation especially was interpreted as an announcement of destruction-cum-renovation for the near future—and in the Middle Ages even the Trinity was more or less heretically keyed to the tune, with the two dispensations of the Father and of the Son condemned to be superseded by the kingdom of the Holy Ghost. With certain Anabaptists the archetype made a bid for power, but owing to its very nature its political usefulness could not outlast the rule of a provisional committee. Even when shorn of its religious connotation as utopian socialism, the archetype cannot warrant anything more than very short-lived governments, readily replaced by Romulian or Augustan tinctures.

This latter, last, ephemeral, intermittent political archetype of Europe—revolt-that-pretends-to-be-Apocalypse—was caught in the net of a painter's brush strokes and now hangs in the *Kunstmuseum* of Düsseldorf. It was first exhibited in 1851 in Berlin, while the echo of the German 1848 revolt was lingering in the atmosphere. The artist, Johan Peter Hasenclever, was at the peak of his activity. He died two years

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later. He had painted "meaningful," often humorous scenes, in the detailed, realistic style of the Düsseldorf school, but here he accomplishes the most lofty task of immobilizing that Proteus: a living, relatively infinite archetype. The scene takes place in the meeting room of a German municipality around 1848. At the center a large window opens onto the town square, thronged with demonstrators. On the left a deputation stands facing the town councilors, seated at their table on the right. The chief delegate from the lower estates waves a petition; he seems stunned at his own daring—a huge fellow, shaky on his legs. One of his companions bares his teeth in a saucy, sinister grin, pointing with his thumb at the crowd in the square. Another is striking an inspired pose: a handsome young man in whose ear a sallow, ill-shaven ideologue is whispering something.

The town council forms a kind of circle at whose center the secretary is seated; a lanky, pale-faced man frozen by fear, he has just stopped penning the minutes. An enormous burgher, sitting with legs spread out under his bulging belly, stares vacantly, passing a handkerchief over his brow. An elderly man is signifying with his hands something like "Gentlemen, please look at the balance sheet; there's no room for further expenditure." One councilor is leaning against the wall and seems captivated by the rebels. Another one, bent over the table, eyes aglare at them, must have just clinched in his mind the plan for a counterthrust. Only after having taken in each single character does one start noticing the background. The walls are hung with archducal or princely portraits, some of them aslant; and in a dark corner stands a suit of medieval plate-armor, with the councilors' top hats thrust over the helmet and the shoulder pieces, an umbrella dangling from the brassard. A whole lesson *a parte* on feudal survivals versus the early manufacturing classes—in a few neat, penumbral dabs.

The scene has been played over and over again, from Masaniello's seventeenth-century Neapolitan revolt to student riots in our century, to all possible political tunes, with all kinds of pretexts. But when the archetype does pounce on a community and holds it in its clutches, then there is no escape, whatever the motivations and backgrounds. Here one is, having no choice, obliged to step into one of the roles in the picture, having to go through the gestures that Hasenclever depicted once and for all. Such is the force of an archetype at work; a Rorschach test is being served us.

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Jogging at Dusk

ANDREW GROSSBARDT

The last minutes of light. My slow shadow
moves distinct against the red dirt, muscles
and tendons easing to their new routine.

The slightest breeze feels its way through the flow
of grain and the whole Missouri landscape
is moving with me. I can hear the corn

growing, the faint crackle of feathered stalks
where the plants stand firm and green.
A mile away, the electric lights

above the football field begin to glow
like artificial stars against the dark
smudge of eastern sky while the last streaks

of light work west toward the edge of the world.
In the distance, the rough noise of a truck
winding down as it reaches the uphill

grade to Brashear. I listen to my breath
and steps forged into a single voice.
I close my eyes, glide to the blood's lonely

rhythm up a long swell of earth. The day's heat
still dances, a vague curtain above the road,
and the sad soft light of evening guides me in.

ANDREW GROSSBARDT is a teaching fellow at the University of Utah. His work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, the *Nation*, and other journals.

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Climbing

DANIEL MARK EPSTEIN

When he gave up mountains he became
a window washer, hoisting himself on block and tackle
fifty stories above the street. For the love of heaven
    is an addiction like stealing
fast time from the round jail of the clock.

He loves high windows. Saves them for last,
looking down on the traffic, crawling workers
whose vision he rinses clean as fresh glass.
Pigeons swing like puppet birds under his hands.
        But does he think downward?

Does he love his fear of the lurking flaw
    in the scaffold, the crack in a faithless plank?
Does he think of the fatal journey
        between his living and his death? No.
He looks in on the nodding accountants, winks

at an astonished secretary who drops her file.
He looks out along miles of reflected rooftops,
    the sky mirrored in the invisible window.
It is like flying on the surface of our lust
    for a visible horizon.

By noon the top windows are clear as a sudden answer,
        at dusk pure gold,
by night they are pure moon blue.
Sadly he rides the elevator down
and starts again at the foot of the blind wall.

DANIEL MARK EPSTEIN is the winner of the 1977 Prix de Rome in Literature. His newest book is *Young Men's Gold.* His play *Jenny and the Phoenix* will be produced by the New York Shakespeare Festival in 1979.

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Reformed Drunkard

VERNON SCANNELL

He wakes in a new world and wears new eyes;
His tongue is sweet, as if all night
Summer rain has been his drink
And has rinsed his gaze. His razor moves
With confidence around a temperate smile.
He puts on laundered clothing, knows that vigor
Is stored like legal tender in his purse;
His motion is exemplary, moreover
His wife now wears a different face.
That stare of apprehension and reproach
Has disappeared; she looks on him with pride,
Especially when at dinner he declines
Without perceptible distress or effort
His host's warm invitation to take wine.
She smiles, approving, with the smallest nod;
He is her favorite child. The vicar, too,
Approves, has even stated publicly
That he admires the man, regards
His abstinence as evidence of courage.
The vicar is wrong. Courage or its absence
Is irrelevant.
Sometimes, not only in his sleep,
He dreams about that other world, returns
To shiver in a gray chemise of sweat.
What he feels is mainly fear, but something more—
Mixed in that pathogenic stew
Are flavorings of desire, relief, regret.
Something warns him not to analyze
The potency and quantity of each.
He walks a straight line very carefully,
Step by step, day by day. It will lead,
He believes, where all lines lead,
But that is not
For him to think about, far less to say.

● VERNON SCANNELL is the author of *A Proper Gentleman* and *Not Without Glory: The Poetry of World War II. The Loving Game*, a recent volume of his verse, won the Heinemann Award and the Cholmondoley Poetry Prize.

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Letter from Yasnaya Polyana

MARTIN GREEN

IT COST ME A LOT OF TROUBLE—and money—to get from Moscow to Tolstoy's home, Yasnaya Polyana. This is a countryside estate 130 miles south of Moscow (near Tula). Although public transport is cheap in Russia, there are government regulations to complicate journeys, and to ignore them would be dangerous. You need a special visa to stay the night near Tula. Indeed, even if you make the trip in a day, you need such a visa, which can be procured easily and quickly only through the good graces of Intourist (the state travel agency). Moreover, if you go on your own, you risk arriving too late to see anything. For me, the only practical way to go was to accept Intourist's terms—in a shiny black car with a chauffeur and a personal guide, like minor royalty. Would the trip be worth it? (It cost 100 rubles, 150 dollars.) Would it be a Tolstoyan thing to do?

Nineteen seventy-eight was the 150th anniversary of Tolstoy's birth, and his admirers all over the world celebrated it. I had heard of scholarly meetings in Warsaw, in Vancouver, some observance organized by UNESCO, and no doubt there have been more. Of these, Tolstoy would almost certainly disapprove, and his disapproval would be more than the crankiness of the standard celebrity. By and large, Tolstoy scholars are celebrating the author of *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*, while Tolstoy repudiated both those novels long before his death. For the last thirty years of his life he was a moral prophet and religious teacher, and what he bequeathed to the world were not works of art but a doctrine of peace and simplification, of diminishment—the diminishment of appetite, personal and social. He, with Gandhi, is the true father and hidden hero of alternative ways of life. The true celebration of his work last year is not to be found at any of the Tolstoy symposia, but at the occupation of the nuclear power plants at Seabrook and elsewhere.

But if the student of Tolstoy ought to go to Seabrook, the teacher of Tolstoy may be allowed a visit to Yasnaya Polyana. To teach Tolstoy demands a study in the theatrical sense—one must to some degree *become* Tolstoy—and his family home is a central part of what one studies. It is the surviving part of his physical presence. The house and grounds were important to his married life and to his work as a writer—

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two things that, incidentally, depended on each other.

In many ways Yasnaya Polyana was Tolstoy's creation: there were only about twenty-four acres of garden when he inherited it in 1847, and there were ninety-six by the mid-1880s. It was a creative or shaping force in his life. He said, "Without my Yasnaya Polyana, it would be hard for me to imagine Russia, and my relation to her. Without Yasnaya Polyana, perhaps, I might see the general laws which are binding on my country more clearly, but I would not love her to the point of prejudice." So the estate made the difference between a Tolstoy and a Lenin? That seems to be what he is suggesting. Certainly it stood between him and his country. He saw Russia through it.

One can see the difference Yasnaya Polyana made, because of its human loveliness, between Tolstoy and other Russian authors. Dostoevsky had no such estate; Turgenev rarely lived on his; Gorky was from quite a different social class. (When Gorky first came to visit Tolstoy, he was so intimidated by the gates of Yasnaya Polyana that he turned away.) Only Tolstoy had a private world to live in, remote from the world metropolises, even from St. Petersburg; a world where he could create a life according to his own values and instincts.

It was private in the limiting sense, too, of course. Yasnaya Polyana was, to use Turgenev's phrase, a nest of gentlefolk, and it was feathered with their privileges. But since it was also a natural and vigorous world, involving work, experiment, passion, the creation of life, those privileges were turned into conditions of creativity. That was the prism through which Tolstoy saw Russia.

We started from my Moscow hotel at eight-thirty—I in my car with my chauffeur and Maya, my guide. Maya was a plain-faced, harried, gold-toothed fifty-year-old. The stresses of life were beginning to distort her face, flashes of anger and despair escaping from her like puffs of steam. But she was knowledgeable: she had made Intourist check on whether the house would be open that day, having had a coach load of tourists turned away on an earlier trip. This was one of her days off, but she had requested the assignment for love of Yasnaya Polyana.

It took us four hours to cover the 130 miles, partly because the road was impeded by trucks, partly because there is a whole satellite city, maybe a hundred huge apartment houses, just outside Moscow on that road. A great deal of building is being done near Moscow and, farther out, city factories are being relocated.

Maya talked nervously and incessantly about the SALT talks and Brzezinski's anti-Russian speeches. She was much concerned by the threat of war. Twenty members of her family had died in the last war—one a child of ten months whose brains were dashed out in his mother's

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presence. She hated the Germans as barbarians and feared the Chinese as fanatics. Like most Russians I met, she thought of her people as especially human, humane, and humanist. As for America, she—again like other Russians—wanted a world dyarchy, or condominium, by the two big countries.

Nelly, our tour guide in Moscow, had taken a tone of comradely reproach with us for being standoffish. She declared that only big countries, like big men, could be generous. "In, say, Belgium, a man looks to the right, he sees one frontier. He looks to the left, he sees the other. Brr!" But Russia, even if now second best, would soon be the biggest country in the world, because Russia was a developing country. (Indeed the Russian papers were full of development news, especially from Siberia: huge new dams, giant power plants, factories to build whole trucks, new cities created overnight.) By contrast, Maya was more humanitarian and conservationist than Nelly. Tolstoy was her hero because of his love of plants and animals; in politics what she wanted was international cooperation in cancer research.

She was a nonstop talker, but after seeing that I preferred to read the book she had brought about Yasnaya Polyana, she directed her stream mainly at Yuri, the chauffeur, an ex-boxer given to chain smoking (in which she immediately took an inquisitive, schoolmistressy interest). The road had only one lane in each direction—only one Russian in a hundred owns a car, I was told—and was a causeway most of the time, the fields low-lying, damp, and fertile. It was gently rolling country, spreading out to very wide horizons on both sides; American, as Maya said.

So we arrived at twelve-thirty and ate lunch at the café opposite the gates. They were built by Tolstoy's grandfather, the Prince Bolkonsky of *War and Peace.* The house was begun by him, completed by Tolstoy's father, the Nicholas Rostov of the same novel. Tolstoy inherited nearly 3,000 acres here, plus more elsewhere; the museum now owns 960, of which nearly 600 are woods, mostly planted by Tolstoy.

Maya insisted on supervising the menu at lunch, checking the bill and taking out leftover food—some for Yuri, some for a dog she'd seen outside. (In her apartment she kept a dog, a cat, and a rehabilitated pigeon, to which she fed a hard-boiled egg each morning, powdered lime, et cetera.) We spent a couple of minutes coaxing the dog, and then strolled across to the white gate towers, squat and square with green bell towers. How many times, in eighty-two years, in how many human forms, had Tolstoy passed between them?

There we were confronted by a militiaman who told us that the estate was closed for the day. . . . It was our fault . . . it was Intourist's fault. . . . It was not his fault. . . . We must go back to Moscow and

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complain . . . nyet, nyet. Maya now proved worth her weight in gold; tears in her eyes, hands at her breast, crying "Bozhe moi" and "Chto mne delat," she followed him step for step as he paced about—pointing to me, describing my high position and long journey. But it was all to no avail. We were not to set foot beyond those gates. (Although there were, as we discovered, many people strolling on the grounds, quite unauthorized, who had simply entered at one of the many unguarded points.)

I peered up the darkly shadowed drive (in 1893 Sonya Tolstoy planted firs there, to replace the old birches) but could not see the house. It was a Natasha Rostov sort of day. The lilacs were out, and acacias, and lilies of the valley—perhaps we might have heard a nightingale. Tolstoy used to tell Turgenev that Yasnaya Polyana was much lovelier than Spaskoye, Turgenev's nearby home.

It was a cruel disappointment, but as much expected as unexpected. Intourist does make such mistakes, as do other Soviet agencies. They are not, after all, accountable to the individuals who are disappointed; they are accountable to their administrative superiors; this is a bureaucracy. All the tension is directed upward, up the chain of command. The individual must cultivate patience—or else, like Maya, learn how to magnify and reify her moans.

But then a woman came by—we never discovered her position—who listened to our story and told the militiaman to let us walk up to the house, to ask "Vera Vasilievna" for special permission. This name, written by an authority, was our passport; Maya kept it in her hand and showed it to everyone we met.

We went up the lovely drive, described in *War and Peace* and called the "Proshpect" by the Tolstoy family, because of the servant's mispronunciation in that novel. "Such an atmosphere!" breathed Maya. "Such peace. . . . This those barbarians would have destroyed." (During the war, the Germans occupied Yasnaya Polyana for forty-five days, desecrated Tolstoy's grave, and set fire to the house when they left.) Indeed there was an atmosphere, but Tolstoy would have been ambivalent about it. We were in the world of art, domestic legend, private life, beyond and behind the militiaman at the gate. He was forgotten, but he was still there.

Symbolically speaking, he'd been there in Tolstoy's time, too. Russia has been a militarist, autocratic, and bureaucratic country since at least the time of Peter the Great. The gentlefolk on estates like this were a privileged and secluded, rather than a ruling, class. Only if a nobleman entered government service did he feel at one with the autocracy. Otherwise, and especially if he was an "intelligent," he felt quite alien to it and its doings.

When Tolstoy held his school at Yasnaya Polyana, between 1859 and

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1862, the government became suspicious, and the place was searched by the police, looking for a printing press. Tolstoy was so furious that he decided to emigrate to England. Then and now, the realm of public order intrudes on that of private happiness; the frontier between the two obtrudes itself everywhere. Tolstoy made the latter magically beautiful and morally intense, for his family at Yasnaya Polyana and for readers of his novels. But finally he had to cross that frontier, confront that militiaman. As he did so, he left Yasnaya Polyana behind. We, as we advanced up that drive, entered unreality.

And yet of course it was real, and large—one might say complete. What a body of experience Yasnaya Polyana is. Tolstoy's childhood memories and love of nature, his agricultural experiments, his educational experiments, his attempts to free the serfs, his achievements as a novelist, his marriage, his thirteen children—love, birth, death, art, all of them were achieved here, and are palpable presences yet.

His mother died when he was two, his father seven years later. He and his brothers and sisters were brought up by female relatives; and when the joint inheritance was divided in 1847, Tolstoy, then nineteen, got the family home and the village of Yasnaya Polyana. He served as an army officer in the war in the Caucasus and again in the Crimea, but never considered settling in Moscow or St. Petersburg, where other writers lived. When he married, he brought his eighteen-year-old bride here, and they lived at Yasnaya Polyana until she felt that the children's education demanded a house in Moscow—and that was the beginning of the worst relations between husband and wife.

He always had some scheme for improving the estate: by forest planting, beekeeping, sheepherding, and so on. For forty years he ran a school for the villagers' children, using free discipline and play methods. And he composed school textbooks here that were used all over Russia.

At the top of the drive we came upon the house, a plain stone classical mansion, one wing of which Tolstoy was born in. (He sold the main body of the house while in the army—needing money, as he often did in his stormy and gambling youth.) No one answered our knock. There was no Vera Vasilievna, and no one to tell us where she was. We decided to visit Tolstoy's grave before we were accosted and evicted. "Well, now I am happy," said Maya. "Now we will see the grave. . . . My heart is beating, but now we will walk peacefully. . . . But I must be so . . . you understand." This muttering and grumbling was as close to silence as she could come.

Tolstoy is not buried where his forebears, wife, and children are, in the cemetery of a church two miles off. He was in fact excommunicated by the Russian Church in 1901. But he had in any case asked to be buried on the estate, without a plaque or a headstone, and these wishes

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were respected by his family. He is just a heave in the ground between trees and grass. At first, the peasants used to plant little sticks there, carrying notes with wishes or questions, as on the graves of miracle-working saints. The grave belongs to the old man himself, whereas the estate belongs to the Tolstoy family—and to the younger Tolstoy, the family man.

But as we left the house, we passed the outdoor gymnasium, which reminds one of the unsaintly side of Tolstoy. Physical culture and physical prowess were always important to him (he took eagerly to tennis and to cycling at the end of his life), and he had a trapeze, a climbing frame, and a "horse" set up outdoors. As late as 1890, when he was over sixty and "into" sanctity, he responded to the challenge of a French visitor with gymnastic exploits intended to dazzle and abash. Tolstoy always wanted to shine, to be the best at everything; and even in his humble trades (shoemaking, ploughing, scything) and experiments in asceticism one sees the same ambition to know and to be everything, to investigate and master and subsume everyone else's mode of being. He was indeed, as his wife said, a creature of both pride and vanity, and he could not cease to be that simply by becoming a man of religion. All he could do was to redirect those drives and make them contradict themselves. His wife could deal only with the great man, not with the man who denied his own greatness.

The grave is three-quarters of a kilometer from the house, and at every turn of our path we saw something connected with a scene in his writing or in his family history. We saw the Voronka meadows where wild flowers grow rife in the spring—described in the foreword to *Hadji Murad*. (Like D. H. Lawrence, Tolstoy was especially fond of wild flowers, and knowledgeable about them.) We saw other meadows where, in *Anna Karenina*, Levin (and, in real life, Tolstoy) mowed hay with the peasants. We saw the shooting spinney that was called Turgenev's because he shot there with Tolstoy. It was the guidebook that told us of these associations, but most of them were taken from the Tolstoy family traditions. Sofia Andreevna was a great creator of family legends, and a great dramatizer of family life. (So was Tolstoy himself, until he came to distrust that drama.)

The grave itself was beautiful. Maples, limes, and birches soared up to more than two hundred feet, and there was a silence through which you could hear birds singing. On the mound the green growth was lighter and brighter than elsewhere. All around was damp—good mushroom country—and the mosquitoes descended on us in swarms. Nearby was a ravine. When Tolstoy was five, the youngest of four brothers, his oldest brother Nicholas told the others that he had written the secret of human happiness on a green stick and buried it in that ravine. The other

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boys then submitted themselves to various disciplines at his behest, in order to learn the secret. At the end of his life, Tolstoy declared that he still believed such a secret was to be found, and asked to be buried by that ravine. But he felt he had been closer to the truth at the age of five than ever after. The brothers played a game of being apostolically good and meek, based on what they had heard of the Moravians. That was the truth to which Tolstoy returned. The excitements of adolescence, of the army, love and marriage, art and politics—all seemed finally insipid beside that early premonition. So his grave is a repudiation of worldly experience and an affirmation of spiritual faith.

The grave must be, objectively speaking, one of the two or three most beautiful spots on earth, in a class with Hardy's cottage and Yeats's grave. (I'm thinking, of course, of the shimmering, birch grove beauty of the north; one cannot easily compare it with the sunbaked grandeur of Lawrence's Taos or Cézanne's Aix.) But the obligatory contrast is with Gandhi's grave—all marble monumentality. Gandhi was the father of free India, and so was buried with full military honors. Tolstoy was politically insignificant, and so he too had an appropriate resting place.

Back at the house, and flashing our passport, we parleyed through a closed window with two women who bent their heads over their sewing and for a long time looked only at each other, answering us with brief phrases and negative nods. But Maya's persistence wore them down. "Never did I know I had such a strength," she whispered to me, closing her eyes, as we waited for the door to open.

So we were finally admitted to a much more satisfactory viewing than (so Maya assured me) the official tour. Generically, of course, Yasnaya Polyana is a country gentleman's house, like a dozen I've seen in England—adapted to the uses of a man of letters and a large family, and unusually pleasant in its combination of simplicity and resources. In the dining room stood a grand piano on which Rachmaninoff, Rubinstein, and Goldenweiser had played, and sometimes played duets with Tolstoy or with his wife.

What I remember best is Countess Tolstoy's room, which has the traditional icon corner (Sofia Andreevna held by all the old traditions) and also dozens of pictures of her family and friends, and dozens of photographs taken by herself. She had, too, a table of remembrance for her son Ivan, who had died tragically young. Her photography, her music, her children, her husband—these were her life, her faith; in their name she felt licensed to fight, to possess, to control, to demand.

Ivan was a gifted child, who Tolstoy thought might be his spiritual heir, and it was to Ivan that Yasnaya Polyana was assigned when, in 1892, Tolstoy renounced the property and divided it among his children. Ivan's death brought the parents together temporarily, but separated

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them in a more permanent way by removing the one subject about which they had similar feelings.

It was from that icon-studded secular chapel that Sofia Andreevna stole into her husband's room, one night in 1910, to rummage through his drawers for current diaries that she thought he was withholding from her. As the high priestess of love, she needed to possess him completely. He awoke and heard her with horror, but said nothing; it was an old story between them, but this was its final chapter. When she returned to her own room, he got up, roused his daughter, and left Yasnaya Polyana that night, never to return. He died on the journey of escape, at eighty-two.

On our way back down the drive, we saw the middle pond into which Sofia Andreevna threw herself when she heard that he had left. A sentimentalist, an emotionalist, she institutionalized her emotions, and was offended by Tolstoy's "coldness" (in fact he too was a very emotional man by nature). Nearby was the summerhouse where Tolstoy's mother (the Princess Mary of *War and Peace*) awaited her husband's returns from trips. For Tolstoy, his mother was only a legend but an emotional one. Sofia Andreevna had had the summerhouse placed there. She made Yasnaya Polyana a temple to her family, to the Tolstoys, to the spirit of family.

The story of the Tolstoy marriage is so alive among Russians that some are still eagerly for Sofia Andreevna, some severely against her. Nelly, our Moscow guide, while not condemning Sofia Andreevna, found her the wrong wife for a great novelist: "It is not easy to be married to a genius" (probably thinking she would have done better). Maya, a sentimentalist, was for Sofia Andreevna. "She was a woman," she said. "We are so."

Maya could not read Dostoevsky—such a "cruel mind." Her great passion was for Vivien Leigh. "For me, she *is* Anna Karenina. As Lady Hamilton, her eyes, such expression. . . ." In her later years, Vivien sold her eyes, Maya said, and lived but meagerly on the proceeds. Maya had known a cousin of the actress, who had told her many things about her—of how she had suffered. "Never shall I love some other person like that."

At the gates, the militiaman dismissed Maya's thanks with a surly nod; it was not *his* doing that we had got in, and he wanted no part in it. Meanwhile the modern café and bookstall confronted us starkly with twentieth-century Russia. Indeed, from near the grave you could see a modern factory, giant machinery in motion. The tentacles of Tula stretched now very close. Yasnaya Polyana was a fragile enclave of private happiness, a temple of culture. So, of course, it was in Tolstoy's day and before. Tula was an armaments center from the time of Peter the Great; even before, iron was mined near Yasnaya Polyana. Peter set

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up Dutch factories in Tula as part of his program of modernizing Russia—using Dutch, Swedish, Prussian, and English models of statecraft and technology. Estates like Yasnaya Polyana and Spaskoye were enclaves of dreaminess one and two hundred years ago. They had—after the seventeenth century—no function that related to Russia's national development.

Yasnaya Polyana was first mentioned in official documents dated 1652, when the land is said to have belonged to the nobleman responsible for maintaining the "zasechnia lesi," a nearby line of defense against the Tatar cavalry: barricades of trees and embankments hidden in the woods. In Peter's time the Tatars ceased to be a danger, and those woodlands were assigned to the Tula factories. In Tolstoy's time they were his favorite riding place, because they were so wild and primitive. Near Yasnaya Polyana was a place called "the wolf trap," in memory of another past danger. Thus the gentry had only memories of these functions of their forebears; they themselves played rather than worked.

But still the village of Yasnaya Polyana, when Tolstoy inherited it, contained 236 male souls who belonged to him, together with their families, possessions, and work capacity. And they lived in primitive poverty; for instance, their *izbas* were "black"—that is, had no chimneys so that the smoke had to leave by the door. Tolstoy took responsibility for his peasants in all kinds of ways: educational, individual, and institutional. His knowledge of them was very detailed, and constituted a major part of his knowledge of Russia.

By now Yasnaya Polyana is a twentieth-century Soviet village and also something of a showplace. Even if the house were occupied by a Tolstoy-like family, and not a museum, it would be quite remote from the village and from the national ethos. Even Tolstoy spent most of the energy of his last twenty years trying to escape it and its privileged remoteness. By one scheme, he would have lived on the estate but not in the mansion. By another, he would have hidden himself from his family, in a village in Finland. And finally he simply ran away. Yasnaya Polyana belonged not to him but to his family, the family of a great artist.

Yet if both he and the Marxist revolutionaries wanted to leave gentry-Russia behind, they moved away from it in opposite directions. Modern Russia is anti-Tolstoyan. Our drive back to Moscow (a route Tolstoy walked in 1886, 1888, and 1889) was beautiful. The sun was shining brightly by mid-afternoon, and our diplomatic-looking Volga sped by those birch groves that were Tolstoy's favorite form of tree life—so graceful, glimmering, labyrinthine. And there were plenty of the old houses to be seen: one story of windows, with sometimes a dormer in the steep roof; three windows at a time, with a carved and painted frame to each, and then a door or a chimney—the paint light blue or sometimes

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green; and the fence, sometimes with cutout ducks or horses, the same color. But what could these things count for beside the huge areas torn up and remade, the giant machines at work? We saw one machine that moved forward so powerfully it left a smooth, flat roadway as wide as sixty or eighty feet, ready for the Tarmac spreader behind it. "Ah, see," said Maya, "see the new machine."

She did not feel the spread of industry around Yasnaya Polyana as really sinister. The mine at Kosaya Gora (in the next village, Shchekino) was visited by Tolstoy, and described in a late pamphlet. The guidebook quotes his horrified description of the miners' work, but goes on to assure us that under Soviet management the mine is quite a different matter. The work is all mechanized, and near the factory stand handsome buildings that contain the workers' library and reading rooms, hospital, recreation area, and so on.

Theoretically, Maya conceded a connection between the spread of the nuclear and chemical industries and the spread of cancer, something that much concerned her. Her sister-in-law had died of cancer; her daughter-in-law was dying of it. Everyone in Russia, she said, has close friends who are stricken. But emotionally she could view "development" only with pride. She showed me the huge buildings of the new cancer research hospital being built near Moscow; only such giant engineering could strike her imagination with authority. The Seabrook occupation she could see as an appropriate protest against Washington, but she could not imagine such a thing directed against Moscow.

The Soviet government has erased Tolstoyism from Russia, while in the West we celebrate the great novelist. And yet in his lifetime his message was far from ignored. Both he and Gandhi were given great publicity, as holy men, in the last years of their lives. They lived in a storm of publicity, always of news value, but also amid devoted disciples. As long as they lived, many were eager to imitate them, even in self-diminishment. They made history look as if it might turn away from its predestined course.

During the first decade of this century, in Russia, Tolstoy's face was an icon of sanctity on pamphlets, posters, and postcards by the thousand. I have seen a Tolstoy postcard, sent by the twelve-year-old Mayakovsky in 1905. But Lenin soon replaced Tolstoy in Mayakovsky's mind. Solzhenitsyn begins his *August 1914* with a scene at Yasnaya Polyana; his hero, being an intellectual of that decade, goes to consult Tolstoy as a guru. But Solzhenitsyn himself has put his faith in *Realpolitik*. And so, in Mayakovsky's way, or Solzhenitsyn's, or Nabokov's, not to mention Stalin's and Brezhnev's, the icon was laid aside, trampled underfoot, or simply lost. And we are left with Yasnaya Polyana, the fragile fairyland of art.

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Fraternal George Sand

ELLEN MOERS

> And now I'm attached to it, this name of mine. . . . I was baptised, obscure and carefree, between the manuscript of *Indiana* which was then my whole future—and a thousand franc note, which was then my whole fortune. It was a contract, a new marriage between the poor apprentice poet that I then was and the humble muse who had consoled me in my difficulties. God defend me from tampering with the dispositions of destiny. What is a name, anyway, in our revolutionary world? A number for those who do nothing, a sign or emblem for those who work or fight. This name I've been given, I made it myself, and I alone, finally, by my labor. I have never exploited the work of another, never taken, or bought, or borrowed a page, a line from anyone. Of the seven or eight hundred thousand francs that I've earned since I was twenty, I have nothing left, and today as at twenty I live from day to day, by this name which protects my work.
>
> George Sand, *Histoire de ma vie*

What should that famous name, George Sand, mean to us? A reasoned answer is that George Sand was a writer—a nineteenth-century French writer who for four and a half decades, from 1831 to 1876, wrote—with verve, eloquence, and power—well over one hundred volumes of prose: fiction, plays, autobiographies, letters, essays. A prolific and successful but not really a popular writer, as Henry James noted with surprise. None of her works was, by the standard of her time or ours, a best-seller, not even *Consuelo*, which sold only a few thousand copies. Among writers and intellectuals, however, she reached what might be called a mass market everywhere around the world; and their tributes to her as spokesman of the age (surpassing even Dickens, Dostoevsky insisted) were touched with reverence and gratitude, as well as hyperbole.

The English critic George Henry Lewes wrote in 1842 that she was "the most remarkable writer of the present century. . . . George Sand is infinitely more than novelist. She is a Poet, not of the head alone, but of the heart—a Poet, not writing clever verses, but uttering the collective voice of her epoch. . . . No genius was ever recognized by the many; George Sand may comfort herself with the appreciation of the few." Lewes was only a young man then and just beginning his career as a critic, but his reverence for Sand as a writer was to prove a bond between him and the two great novelists he most influenced, Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot. They, too, read George Sand as the genius of their age; they, too, reverenced the poet and the thinker in the novelist.

Turgenev, Renan, Heine, Dostoevsky, the Brownings, the Carlyles, Mill, Ruskin, Taine, Whitman, Marx, Wilde—all testify that, among the nineteenth-century intellectuals, reading Sand was something of an addiction. And it was almost a Victorian parlor game to mark the influence of Sand's novels on other people's fiction, as Marian Evans (the future George Eliot) saw marks of *François le Champi* in Thackeray's *Henry Esmond*. Patricia Thomson, in her brilliant new study,

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George Sand and the Victorians, assembles evidence for the serious consequences of Sand's influence on the fiction of the Brontës and George Eliot, of Hardy, Meredith, and James, particularly the last. Henry James wrote ten review essays on Sand, and as some of his apprentice tales and much of *Roderick Hudson*, his first novel, reveal, when he began to write fiction he was clearly a Sand disciple. However, a number of the prominent Victorian addicts of Sand's fiction—Emerson, Whitman, Ruskin, Arnold—were people who otherwise had little use for the novel as a form. Matthew Arnold, the most important English literary critic of the century, could barely say a good word for Dickens and, devoted as he was to contemporary French literature, never once mentioned the name of Flaubert; but he went on reading Sand's novels all his life.

When she died in 1876, Arnold predicted that "the immense vibration of George Sand's voice upon the ear of Europe will not soon die away." He was wrong: within a quarter of a century intellectuals stopped reading Sand. Virtual silence descended on the academy and the critical journals; no more vibrations. (An exception must be made, however, for the turn-of-the-century women writers who explored Sand's autobiography for parallels to their own writing lives: Edith Wharton, Gertrude Stein, Kate Chopin, Colette, Willa Cather, Virginia Woolf—the last of whom quoted Sand's *Story of My Life* at the end of *Three Guineas*.) Marcel Proust wrote the experience of reading Sand, as a nineteenth-century child, into his *Remembrance of Things Past*, and thus George Sand's work slipped, with so much else, into *le temps perdu*.

By a reversal of taste as extreme as any in literary history, and by a process of denigration familiar to experts in women's history, to most people the name of George Sand came to mean not an author, but a target for labels: transvestite, man-eater, lesbian, nymphomaniac. The very texts of some of her volumes had vanished, as French scholars discovered when they began the massive labor of recovering the writer George Sand; for, predictably, the reversal of literary taste was due to be again reversed, and Sand was to return to our own time as a writer, not a caricature.

When the revival of interest in Sand's work started quietly in France in the 1930s, it was once again an intellectual phenomenon, beginning with two eminent Frenchmen, Edouard Dolléans and Alain, who happened to be friends. Dolléans was the historian of nineteenth-century working-class movements in France (he also wrote a history of Chartism in England), and he began to write about Sand with the deepest respect because of her own involvement with working-class poets and politics, because of her influential role as champion of *le peuple*. Alain turned to Sand because of her love of nature and music, her passion and her prose. Alain, pen name of the critic Emile Chartier, is best known outside France as the teacher of philosophy whose students brought him fame, notably Simone Weil and André Maurois. And it was Maurois's biography, called *Lélia: The Life of George Sand* and published in 1952, that gave the Sand revival wide and international currency.

In the 1960s and 1970s, literary scholars in France and Italy prepared definitive new editions of Sand's novels (including *Consuelo, La Comtesse de Rudolstadt, Indiana, Lélia, Mauprat, La Mare au Diable, François le Champi, La Daniella*) and supplied learned introductory studies of Sand's politics, her knowledge of music and history, her use of dialect and regional lore, her place among the Romantics. Georges Lubin, the dean of Sand scholars, edited her autobiographical writings (which include her masterworks) and since 1964 has been editing Sand's correspondence—twelve volumes of it for the years through 1854, with two more decades of Sand's life and presumably ten more volumes still to come. The letters are dazzling. Had she written nothing else, George Sand would be securely known as one of the greatest of all practitioners of the form.

Because of the incredible range of Sand's epistolary relationships and concerns, Georges Lubin's scholarship has perforce reached out to include virtually all politics and all the arts in mid-nineteenth-century Europe, not to mention the day-by-day chronology of Sand's passionate life as writer, lover, mother, friend, and *châtelaine*. His magisterial edition of the *Correspondance* has formed the basis for the two new scholarly lives of George Sand, both widely read and widely hailed,

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both by Americans: Curtis Cate (1975) and Joseph Barry (1976).

Both Cate and Barry know far more about Sand's intimate life than did any of her contemporaries, because the documentation at their command is so enormous. Yet the "new" George Sand who emerges from their biographies is remarkably like the "old" George Sand as perceived in her own time by those who knew her, or who divined her character from her writings. She has a brilliant, well-stocked mind and a warm heart; she has courage, energy, vitality, generosity, responsibility, good humor, and charm; she has aristocratic distinction combined with bohemian informality; she is a wise, passionate, down-to-earth human being, and disappointingly sane. These days we want our writers to be crazies; in the mid-nineteenth century people wanted their writers to be great men. Their ideal of a writer was Goethe (to whom George Sand was often compared) because of the wholeness and fullness of both his active and his spiritual life. "A great man . . . is the living light-fountain . . . of manhood and heroic nobleness," said Carlyle, who chose Goethe as his "specimen of the hero as literary man" and privately admitted there was "something Goethian" about George Sand, but never would have said so in public because she was a woman.

She was a woman who was a great man: that is what her admirers most wanted to say about George Sand. But words of gender being what they are, suggestions of abnormality and monstrosity cling to their portraits of Sand, all unintentionally, and quite the reverse of what her admirers had in mind. Elizabeth Barrett (later Mrs. Browning) began a sonnet to Sand with the line "Thou large-brained woman and large-hearted man," and what she intended as a tribute to wholeness came out sounding grotesque. Similarly, Balzac wrote down his impressions of Sand after a visit to her home in Nohant: "She is boyish, an artist, she is great-hearted, generous, devout and *chaste;* she has the main characteristics of a man; *ergo* she is not a woman."

Flaubert, who wrote the novella *Un Coeur simple* for Sand's approval, wept at her funeral and said, "You had to know her as I did to know how much of the feminine there was in that great man, the immensity of tenderness there was in that genius." And Turgenev: "What a brave man she was, and what a good woman."

Reading George Sand is to encounter a great man who was all woman, not a phenomenon—though that such a life, a spirit, a style were possible struck her contemporaries as phenomenal, for they had never known a literary woman of her kind before. Reading Sand is also to return to a romantic age, to find the lanes greener, the nightingales thicker, the stars brighter, the breezes softer, the colors brighter, and the tones more heavenly, for Delacroix is painting, Viardot is singing, Liszt and Chopin are at the piano; and the hopes of relieving human suffering, of binding all humanity into one golden solidarity, are more dazzling than ever before. Reading Sand, however, is not the ponderous experience that American and English readers might expect from our rather Victorian definition of "greatness of character." George Sand was very French, and she never took herself very seriously.

When she was twenty-six she set out for Paris to become a writer—to support herself and her dependents by writing—in 1831, when high romanticism was in full sway in France, and the new writers were named Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Musset, Vigny, Balzac, Stendhal, Mérimée, Sainte-Beuve. When she was twenty-seven, George Sand, the author of *Indiana*, was one of the names on that romantic list. With the speed and energy characteristic of her entire literary career, she accomplished her apprenticeship to journalism and fiction, including the writing of dozens of volumes and thousands of pages, the making of contacts and finding of markets, all within fifteen months. She also established a dual way of life that made itself felt throughout all her writings. On the one hand, she was an independent: her officer father and aristocratic grandmother long dead, her mother removed, her maiden name (Dupin) and married name (Dudevant) abandoned, her husband put in his place by a formal contract of separation. She was a Parisian and a cosmopolitan, in touch with all that was new in the arts and in political thought. But, on the other hand, she was a countrywoman, in residence principally in her province of Le Berry, and enmeshed, voluntarily and wholeheart-

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edly, with human ties: her two children; her country estate of Nohant, with its servants, peasants, neighbors, its spreading regional associations of memory and legend; and her lovers and friends. Friends were, as far as George Sand could manage it, for life; lovers came and went more quickly, but they, too, long had a claim on her responsibility and generosity.

The case of Jules Sandeau, the young poet with whom she lived during her first year in Paris, set something of a pattern. She supported him, got him to write and publish, financed his military replacement; and when they broke up she contributed to a trip to Italy to cure him of the doldrums. Such generosity, because unfamiliar to us from the annals of male writers in love, has been called abnormal, and Sand's easy assumption of the maternal role at the height of passion has been made to appear a monstrosity, which it was not. Much has been made of the fact that most—not all—of Sand's lovers were younger than she, but little attention has been paid to her avoidance of married men, her refusal to compete with other wives and mistresses—a scrupulousness which perforce limited her choice of lovers to young bachelors. Sand's lovers were men of talent, even genius, and they flourished rather than faded because of her; Chopin, for example, wrote his greatest music during their nine years together. Her love encompassed their health and their work, her writing paid their bills, because she was a woman of energy and character.

Indiana, the novel that first made the name of George Sand famous, is in many ways uncharacteristic of her fiction, with its debts to the earlier romanticism of Mme. de Staël and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, its small cast of mainly wealthy characters, its unlikely Bourbon Island references, its melancholy Englishman. (Yet she may even be forgiven Sir Ralph if, as has been argued, he inspired the relationship between Ralph and Isabel Archer in Henry James's *Portrait of a Lady*.) But already in *Indiana* the distinctive pleasures of reading Sand make themselves felt, and the first of these are country pleasures: country nights, country solitude, country passions, country journeys, the horses and dogs and pastimes, even the boredom of rainy autumn evenings in the country interior. It was, however, her second novel, *Valentine*, in which Sand's originality as landscapist and country chronicler (and creator of rebellious heroines) overwhelmed readers such as Matthew Arnold. He responded as a young man to what he called "the cry of agony and revolt" in Sand's early fiction; but what Arnold *did* in response was to set off on a journey into Sand's countryside and Sand's interior at Nohant—a pilgrimage on which he has been followed ever since by untold thousands of enthusiasts of romantic art and romantic nature.

At her best, no one has ever surpassed George Sand as the novelist of nature, because her style pulsates with a natural vigor and music and because she was a countrywoman as well as a Romantic. Her range includes not only the mysteries and enchantments of distant horizons and perilous wanderings, of superstition and legend, of ecstatic (and often feminist) solitude, but also the closely observed and dearly loved realities of peasant life: the greeds and frugalities, the labor of the seasons, the farm animals and insects, the stolid silences of illiterate folk radiated with their music and dancing, their enchanting dialects. Her *romans champêtres (La Mare au Diable, François le Champi, La Petite Fadette, Jeanne, Les Maîtres Sonneurs, Le Meunier d'Angibault)* are those of Sand's novels which have never gone completely out of fashion and to which the English country novelists (George Eliot and Thomas Hardy) were most in debt.

But Sand had something her English imitators did not, and that was her grasp of history. "Tout concourt à l'histoire," she wrote, "*tout est l'histoire*, même les romans qui semblent ne se rattacher en rien aux situations politiques qui les voient éclore." Her country tales and her love stories take place in the churning past and the open future of a world of toppling regimes, shifting classes, and clashing ideologies. Even in *Indiana*, Delmare is the husband he is because a displaced Bonapartist; Indiana is the wife she is because the daughter of slaveholding colonials; and Raymon is the lover he is because an apologist for constitutional monarchy, his political portrait drawn after a minister of the July Monarchy, which had come into power two years before the publication of the novel. When Sand gives her heroine views on women's education, as in *Valentine*, they are

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those of an aristocrat who remembers what happened to her sex and class during the French Revolution. Sand places most of her young heroes in generational conflict with their fathers, and offers them as typical *enfants du siècle.* She demonstrates that even the illiterate peasant—as in the interesting study of Patience in *Mauprat*—could be touched by the ideas of the Enlightenment. And in some of the most brilliant sections of *Histoire de ma vie* she presents her own childhood as riven by the class and period ideologies held by her grandmother and her mother, and seconded even by their maids.

It can be something of a relief to turn from the slow-moving dream time of Hardy and George Eliot to the faster pace of George Sand's European world—a world, as Marx read it and we still read it today, in revolutionary turmoil. Sand was a shrewd, committed, and radical observer of the half-dozen regimes that rose and fell in France during her lifetime. As minister (without portfolio) of propaganda, she played an active political role—greater than any woman before her—in the revolutionary government of 1848. Correspondent of Mazzini, of Gutzkow, of Bakunin, she was in touch with most of radical Europe. In all her work, her fiction and nonfiction, ideology remains a principal excitement, never a bore.

Less interesting to us today, I think, than to her contemporaries is Sand on the passion of love; here there can be the boredom of excess French talk, of impossible chastities, of improbable plots. "I don't care," wrote George Eliot, ". . . whether I think the design of her plot correct or that she had no precise design at all. . . . I cannot read six pages of hers without feeling that it is given to her to delineate human passion . . . with such truthfulness such nicety of discrimination such tragic power and withal such loving gentle humour that one might live a century with nothing but one's own dull faculties and not know so much as these six pages will suggest." Sand remains interesting as the chronicler of passion in the occasional scene where, as V. S. Pritchett has put it, "her people and landscapes are silhouettes seen in sheet lightning"—for example, the Noun-Raymon love scene in Indiana's bedroom, which made Alfred de Musset first admire before he fell in love with its author.

Today George Sand's social thought sustains her love stories rather than the other way around, for her pairing of lovers of different ages and places and classes still conveys that aspiration toward a new, humane social order which lifted the hearts of her contemporaries and has the power still to move even our own. A commonplace of Romanticism was the use of human love as the paradigm of social solidarity; but from Schiller's (and Beethoven's) *Ode to Joy* to Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* that theme ordinarily centered on man's love for man, on fraternity. Sand's originality—and it was this that must have attracted Dostoevsky to her heroines—was to redefine fraternity from the woman's point of view, as friendship between men and women. Certainly her ideal of marriage, which she despaired of seeing fulfilled under the current legal system, was that of perfect friendship, without rivalry or dominance, of two beings come together in the state of unity and wholeness that, as she wrote Flaubert, is nature's supreme law.

Friendship seems to me to be George Sand's greatest theme. It pervades her fiction and her politics, shapes her style and her humor, and makes her *Lettres d'un voyageur,* those exquisitely worded imaginary dialogues of reflection and criticism, her single greatest work. Even the disarray of her novel plots is sometimes excused by her charming finales of communal life, when groups of lovers settle down together for a friendly sharing of work, talk, child raising, and country pleasures that seems to promise more of ecstasy than all their frenetic lovemaking. At the end of *Valentine,* peasants and aristocrats are so united; at the end of *Les Maîtres sonneurs,* the workers of the fields with their rivals, the wandering foresters. In *Valvèdre,* the late novel that Arnold ranked among her best, Sand's ultimate programmatic fantasy of communality makes friends of scientist, industrialist, and artist, of "new" woman and old, of Protestant, Catholic, and Jew.

Sand worked hard at her friendships, writing marvelous letters, dispensing generous hospitality. A highly skilled domestic manager, she made Nohant (the locale of her own slavery to ceaseless writing) into a haven of comfort and bohemian relaxation for such as Liszt, Balzac, Juliette Adam, Gautier, Turgenev, Flaubert, Pauline Viardot, Delacroix—

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who were her friends, not her lovers. But her genius for friendship seems to have originated in childhood, the period of her life which, to the despair of scandalmongers, dominates her *Story of My Life*.

There Sand opens what to us seems unusual, but what for her was her birthright as a French countrywoman: the friendly association between bastard and legitimate half-siblings, between unrelated children raised by the same wet nurse (the Noun-Indiana relationship), between future peasant and future *châtelaine*. Sand wrote, and there is something to it, that her ideas of utopian communism originated in her girlhood participation in the communality of peasant labors and diversions. Certainly she had not a trace of gentility or snobbery, not a shred of vainglory over being a *propriétaire*. Nohant was where her heart was, but Nohant made her neither proud nor wealthy. It was her writing, not her land, which supported her; and of that she was justly proud.

A talk with friends is her manner in her best tales and memoirs and essays and even political propaganda—a manner which she raised to the dignity of the grand style. And it is her style, finally, which makes reading George Sand an addiction. "The taste one develops for Sand," wrote the critic Emile Faguet, "is a kind of sympathy. Her style becomes our friend. And we more easily free ourselves of an enchantment than of a friendship."

Borges

WILLIS BARNSTONE

Old man from the North, immaculate liar,
your iron helmet and the deadened eyes
waken at dawn, and watch red spears take fire
and fade on Danish beaches. You despise
the lazy, learned man moving in gentle
amazement with a cane, who keeps a gold
watch in his coat so he can lose the mental
melee with time. You feel remorse for old
Jorge Luis Borges, outwitting God,
Persians, and the algebra of being. Both of
you hunt like madmen for a word. Your love
never shows, although it burns behind the sword
of iron and the cane. You are a fraud
and friend, a haunting light and lonely lord.

WILLIS BARNSTONE, professor of comparative literature at Indiana University, recently completed a collection of essays, *Mystics and Other Poets*. His work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, the *Nation*, and other journals.

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Memoirs of a Middle-Class Pianist

EDWARD ROTHSTEIN

According to Theodor Leschetizky, the nineteenth-century virtuoso pianist and teacher of Paderewski, Brailowsky, Schnabel, and countless others, there are three requisites for pianistic greatness: a prodigious childhood, Slavic ancestry, and Jewish descent. Leschetizky himself only satisfied the first two criteria, but achieved greatness. I only satisfy the last two, and will not.

I was not a child prodigy. Had Carl Czerny heard me at the age of eight, as he heard the young Liszt in 1819, he would not have been amazed at nature's gifts to me. Nor could I have, at the age of ten, given my American debut, as Josef Hofmann did in 1887, baffling the audience and critics with his powers. At that age I was probably struggling with my first piano sonata, my hands awkwardly trying to work together, my ears not hearing anywhere near all there was to be heard. Nor, I must confess, would my playing baffle the critics even now, and the day of my debut will never come. For I am an amateur, a lover of the instrument whose amatory trysts with it are limited—and not completely by my own choice.

Yet, years ago, I must have been as excited as any prodigy would have been when my parents bought our spinet piano. I found it in the living room after school. It stood there, against the wall, the keyboard invitingly open. I had only touched one secretly, at school, so I rushed to the awkwardly high bench. I reached over to the keys, and with both hands banged as hard as I could, imagining, or possibly even hearing, the tumultuous music I knew was made somehow by pianists I had heard in concert or on television. There was a joy in just producing that mass of sound, with a spread hand slapping the bass notes and maybe, more delicately, an extended index finger randomly hitting treble tones in a nonexistent melody. I was producing, in my mind at least, a complex musical texture, and if it pleased my patient listeners less than it did me, it must have been because they couldn't understand the physical pleasure in making that sound: grabbing at the keys with my hand, flexing my fingers, straining for the sustaining pedal with my feet, and sweeping astounding arpeggios up and down the keyboard.

I was also a little disappointed in the instrument. When I was very young the piano, untouched, seemed also a magical object. All I could see on the TV screen or the concert stage were fingers flying over white objects laid in a row, attached to a massive ebony wing; as the hand passed over the keys, they turned black while sound was produced. But the actual mechanism in my home seemed rather pedestrian. If I hit a key, it descended and a tone sounded. The keys did not change color nor did there seem to be anything magical about the result. Later, looking at the keys from the side, I understood that illusory transformation from light to dark. If that mystery could fade, so did the appeal of the cacophony I enjoyed, especially if I listened to somebody else bang away. Could that sound be like the passionate storm I was producing, those random notes and harsh clusters that were close to what I had always called noise? They certainly did not resemble the music I thought I had been making, nor the inner quiet humming I used to make to myself—not known melodies, but unknown ones, sweet, almost unheard, comforting, while at play or work.

If that rough encounter with the keyboard did not dissolve the mystery completely, pi-

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ano lessons did. There was pleasure in learning to read music, matching the signs with the keyboard, learning their names, numbering the fingers, playing with both hands for the first time, learning that each note had its place not only on the keyboard and in the hand, but in time. But it was also labor to learn this strange language, to concentrate on my awkward hand positions, to count, to count endlessly as I learned the rhythms, and to play daily, stretching my recalcitrant body and mind, for a half hour. My father did not come home, as Beethoven's did, and rouse me at midnight to play for him till morn, but I could not have willed myself to practice so regularly without the backing of my family's will.

This was not an unusual fate for a nonprodigious musician, aged seven. Many of my friends acquired instruments around the same time. They too, I comforted myself, often had to sit at the keyboard after dinner in the spring, when the faltering tones would lose their melodic power compared with sounds of skates and shouting and bicycles that other more fortunate nonprodigies were producing outside the half-open door in the warm evenings. Nor, I know now, was that position unique in modern history. That piece of musical cabinetry gave me a certain privilege, and it also changed the appearance of the living room. The piano, Max Weber writes, is "a significant piece of middle-class furniture," and I and my middle-class friends, for all our love of music, were continuing in a tradition that began years before Jane Austen created her piano-playing heroines.

Although I didn't know it at the time, I shared a kinship with that instrument. We were connected, the piano and I, and not just by my daily practice in my parents' living room. We were both born into the middle class.

Before I, or that class, or the piano itself came into being, keyboards had very different social niches. The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century organ was God's instrument, to be found only in His house, with the keyboard and its player invisible; the powerful sounds seemingly originated without human intervention, as if from above. The harpsichord, on the other hand, found a more secular home with the aristocracy, who often collected the instruments less for their sound than for their exquisite, elegant casings; they wanted both the instrument and its player to be all too visible, for the nobility's own greater glory. It was to these aristocratic keyboards, and their secular glory, that the rising middle class of traders and merchants looked—to claviers that would be played modestly, easily, and demonstratively by the woman of the house. The instrument became the social center of the home.

In his splendid encyclopedic history of the piano, *Men Women and Pianos,* the pianist Arthur Loesser underscored the point that there is never a radical shift in the social and economic realms without an accompanying shift in the musical realm as well. Thus, the harpsichord could not adequately express the new sensibility of the latter part of the eighteenth century. Instead of the complex textures of the baroque, or the stately stylized music of the court, there grew a music that could thoroughly picture the activities of the middle class—its striving, its emphasis on the individual will. It was a music that came to maturity with the middle class in the nineteenth century, though a hundred years earlier it might have revealed itself as "song." For at the end of the eighteenth century, a conception of melody and song developed that still dominates our nostalgic musical tastes today, a conception that is somehow intricately connected to a particular class and its music. Indeed, it was around that time in Germany that the word *Lied* first became fully respectable. One collection, published in 1793, was entitled *Songs sacred to burgherly and domestic happiness, to amiable morality, and to guiltless pleasure.*

The harpsichord could hardly join in sentimental burgherly song. Paradoxically, its aristocratic nature—its restraint, its discrete, formalized passions—became passé at the same time that the aristocracy was most imitated. There was, however, another baroque keyboard, which was closer to the transformed sensibility and which was often found in the middle-class home—the clavichord. Unlike the harpsichord, which, with its mechanically plucked strings, could produce only one dynamic level at a time, the clavichord had strings that were struck by "tangents" connected directly to the keys; the sound could

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be made louder or softer, depending upon the force with which a key was struck. Moreover, the tangents stayed in contact with the thin strings as long as the keys were depressed, so by increasing the pressure on a depressed key, the string itself would stretch and change pitch. It was an instrument that let the player manipulate the sound in a way the harpsichord could not. Yet the voice of this small, light instrument was so restrained that it was private in its pianissimo sound, hardly adequate for the rising passions of a rising class, and for the public events, the concerts, which that class began to patronize.

If the piano had not existed, it would have had to have been invented—as it was, slightly ahead of its time. Although there is evidence of sixteenth-century dulcimers played with hammers, the invention of the pianoforte is generally credited to an Italian, Bartolommeo Cristofori, a harpsichord maker for Prince Ferdinand de Medici, who owned forty keyboard instruments. In 1711 Cristofori described in a journal what he called a "*Nuova invenzione d'un gravicembalo col piano e fòrte*," a "new invention of a harpsichord with 'soft' and 'loud.' " In place of the harpsichord's quills to pluck the strings, or the clavichord's tangents that remained in contact with them, the new instrument had hammers covered with deer leather. The harder the keys were struck, the faster the hammers were tossed against the strings. The mechanism, crude as it was, was a technical achievement.

It was no accident, as the theoreticians say, that it was in Italy, where opera developed and string instruments were perfected, that this keyboard with a potential for song was invented. But the instrument did not evolve in the south. Rather, it took root in Germany where an eccentric harpsichord maker, Gottfried Silbermann, made pianofortes after reading of Cristofori's invention. "It is no accident," Max Weber declared, "that the representatives of pianistic culture are Nordic peoples, climatically house-bound and home-centered in contrast to the South."

The piano, then, became an anchor for the home. Like the clavichord, it had the power to vary its volume, a power that became more important as the era of sentiment replaced the late baroque. It embodied the tensions of the age: the sentiment and passion of the solitary player were controlled by a familial social context, while the home was bonded by the shared sentiment and resonated with the presence of an almost ritualistic object. The instrument was cheap enough so that it could be afforded by what we would now call the upper-middle class, and expensive enough to retain an exclusive and aristocratic aura. By the end of the eighteenth century, the piano was so established that compositions were written with dynamic markings. It had become, in a short time, the primary keyboard instrument, as quickly and completely as the social world had changed. When the revolution in France confiscated 127 keyboard instruments from 111 houses in Paris, just over half were pianofortes. In England, Johann Christian Bach was one of the first to play the instrument in a public concert, and in 1791, when Haydn came to London, he conducted from a piano.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the piano was as common in the bourgeois household as aspirations for a good marriage. With that class it entered fully into the age of industry and commerce. Pianos had become so numerous, so much in demand, that they were no longer made to order; their construction had itself become an industry. In England, during the instrument's infancy, the Broadwood firm was already producing an average of 400 pianos a year. (They later provided Beethoven with one, which he praised.) By the 1850s that figure grew to 2,300. In Paris, where the Pleyels and Erards had set up shop, Eduard Fétis wrote in 1847, "There is not a home, even of the smallest bourgeois, where one does not find a piano." There were 60,000 instruments in the city.

The pianos were made for families by manufacturers who were themselves part of family dynasties. The tradition was also established in the United States when Jonas Chickering set up shop in Boston in 1818, and particularly when a German, Henry Steinweg, came to New York in 1850, changed his name to Steinway, and began making pianos. By 1869 he was making a thousand instruments a year.

Often the piano was so essential a part of the middle-class home that it was no more than a sign, a piece of furniture that mattered more than what was inside. One early, elaborately decorated clavier was constructed

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without room for the player's legs. Others were built in round and hexagonal shapes, or with mirror cases. In 1866, a piano was built which included in its hollow frame a bed, a closet, a bureau, washbasin, and a set of false drawers. All it needed was the soon-to-be-invented mechanical playing device.

Instruments were also designed for those restricted by economic necessity. In the mid-nineteenth century, Arthur Loesser reports, a member of the Erard family, the first Parisian piano makers, predicted the trend: the large sizes of pianofortes "were to become an obstacle to their sale, as a consequence of the growing narrowness of apartments." The upright piano grew in popularity, with its strings and sounding board standing perpendicular to the floor. The mechanism was more complex, the instrument less responsive, but it was more accessible.

The instrument sitting in my family's living room, then, was no isolated phenomenon. Bought for a few hundred dollars from a pianist looking for a better instrument, it was a sign of higher aspirations. It was much more than a piece of furniture. And so it stood before me as a child, waiting to be played.

II

I did not, however, continue playing the piano for long. At about the age that most child prodigies withdraw from their early ebullience to rework and comprehend their naïve capabilities—at about the age of fifteen, that is—I stopped playing completely. My progress had been slow, almost nonexistent. Along with the traditional middle-class mixture of show tunes and popular arrangements of classics, I had "played" sonatas by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, fugues by Bach, waltzes by Chopin, but, apart from Bach, the music remained mute. Practicing had become a chore. The piano and its music suffered through my adolescence.

Then, in the absence of playing, I began to listen. While at college the music I had begun to listen to with attention, the recordings, the concerts, seemed to speak to me in a new way—not from outside but from within. I approached a piano and haltingly stumbled through some old music. But it was the sound that captured me, not my playing. When very young, I had found magic in the mechanism of the piano, and in the gross production of sound. Now I began to savor the sound itself. Some mornings I could gently strike a note and listen to it resonate and gradually fade away as if listening to the most artful decrescendo, relishing the sound with sensual pleasure.

With that pleasure came a strong desire and a frustration, for musical consummation was out of my fingers' reach. I again began to take lessons, but it was as if for the first time. I practiced, during the following years, in a geometric progression: first two hours a day, then four, and finally, one rare summer, stripped to my waist, in sweltering heat, I practiced from noon through to the evening, seven days a week. A world began to open to me.

At college, walking down the halls with practice rooms on either side, still warm in the ear from my own playing, I could hear all I thought I would never play, musical history in haphazard display, with phrases of Bach's Goldberg Variations mixed with the Liszt Mephisto Waltz, the Beethoven Concerto in G Major, and Scriabin and Bartók and Bach again. But it was not only music I heard; I also heard it dissected: here, a passage breaks down and is repeated, more slowly, and then repeated again; there, a series of scales, or arpeggios, and exercises for the independence of fingers that sound to an untrained ear like the playing of an awkward child. A walk down those halls was not only a break from my own practice, or an opportunity to hear some fine playing; it was also a rite in a strange community of students who drew encouragement and company, competition and frustration, from the sounds of others before withdrawing again to the isolation of the keyboard and their own physical, aural, mental limitations. It was like being able to study the rough drafts of a poem, or the discarded sketches for a painting. It took many walks to convince myself that music did not spring effortlessly from other pianists' fingers, but my own limitations were clear. Close to tears in one lesson, I realized I might never have the technique to play the Brahms Concerto in B-flat; my teacher, understanding, responded that she might not either; her hands were too small.

For all but the select, the born gymnasts, with finely tuned mental and physical cir-

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cuits, the paths to high pianistic competence are strewn with obstacles. There are five-year-old children who play with more ease and grace than I shall ever have, who seem born to the instrument. It is a physical gift—perhaps like Rubinstein's fifth finger being as long as his middle finger—but it is also something more. Josef Hofmann managed quite well with hands too small to play octaves (Steinway later designed a special keyboard for him). Technique, Horowitz has said, "is a temperament and a skill." It is an achievement of the ear and mind, as in feats of instantaneous transposition, or transcription, and of the body, as in Alexander Dreyschock's famous achievement, playing the *Revolutionary Étude* with left-hand octaves. It is the possession of open possibility on the keyboard, so that no musical moment is lost through physical difficulty. It is the power of the pianist to do what he wishes with the music and, of course, to do what the composer wishes. It may be the ability to trill rapidly with the weak fourth and fifth fingers while the thumb sings out a melody underneath, as in Beethoven's last sonata, or to pass four melodic voices over each other with perfect control as they pass from finger to finger, or hand to hand, as in a Bach fugue. It is a mastery over other aspects of the instrument as well: the uses of the soft, *una corda* pedal perhaps, or the rhythmic use of the sustaining pedal to control sound. It is the ability to play rapidly, to vary tone, to control rhythm, to hit notes accurately. It comes down to the ability to play the piano as it should be played: with a supple body, a sensitive ear, and in service to the music.

The physical difficulties of piano playing are usually separated from the aural or mental faculties, in the tradition of technical discussion that began in the nineteenth century which treated the body as a machine that had to be properly adjusted and oiled. At certain points, though, the physical approach is necessary, for the physical problems are staggering. The fourth finger of the hand, for example, is connected by tendons to the third and fifth fingers, yet somehow it must work independently and be subject to subtle control. The simplest of movements on the keyboard requires an intricate series of tensions and relaxations; hands must shift positions almost instantaneously within a limit of millimeters, and press the keys with a speed and force precisely matching the requirements of the music. No muscle may tire or tense. The body must be poised with possibility.

I knew that this was what I had to work for in my practice. But in its stead my movements jerked, my fingers plodded along missing notes, my hands were disjointed, my arms and shoulders tense. Some problems could be solved while learning a composition, since each phrase learned expands the physical possibilities for the next, but I also needed a basic physical vocabulary, the basics of tonal music, drilled into my fingers, hands, and ears, the scales and arpeggios of the twenty-four keys. If I added to these exercises those for independence of fingers, for trills, for rapid repetitions, for octaves, for voicing . . . the regimen could take hours before a note of real music was even played.

Such work became a separate branch of musical composition during the nineteenth century as the instrument itself was developing. Czerny, Hanon, Hummel—the names still strike dread into any piano student. "The grand thing," the American Amy Fay wrote of musical practice in Europe in 1873, "the grand thing is to have each of your five fingers go 'dum dum' an equal number of times." In the early part of the century exercises for high, independent fingers were emphasized; in the latter part arm movements, control over weight, and relaxation were emphasized. Every teacher had his method but most demanded one thing: unrelieved labor. Carl Czerny, who studied with Beethoven and taught both Lizst and Leschetizky, and so stands at the heart of a pianistic genealogy, wrote: "*Industry and Practise* are the Creators and Architects of all that is great, good, and beautiful on the earth." Hans von Bülow, a later pianist, was more explicit:

> I devote the greater part of my time, four or five hours daily, exclusively to the cultivation of technique. I make martyrs of the eventual founders of my material prosperity; I crucify, like a good Christ, the flesh of my fingers, in order to make them obedient submissive machines to the mind, as a pianist must.

The industry of the middle class was needed to play the piano, not just to buy it—an industry tied to "material prosperity." But it was also a religion, a source of physical and

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musical power founded upon the creation of a machine.

The tedium could be unbearable. Liszt used to read while he practiced. Adolf Henselt, a less natural technician than Liszt, diverted himself more expertly. He would muffle the strings so they could hardly be heard, practice Bach fugues—and read the Bible. But the work itself had to be done. "When you think you are practising very slowly," Liszt said, "slow down some more. You spoil everything if you want to cut corners. Nature itself works quietly. Do likewise."

But how can one prevent what Heine, in his *Lutetia*, called a "victory of mechanism over spirit"? How can the pianist not be an automaton, and the instrument not a piece of wired wood that mirrors its player? Where is the music? In fact, the most serious limitations seem to be not in the human body but in the wired wood. Voltaire said the early pianoforte was a "kettle-maker's instrument in comparison with the harpsichord," but he did not go far enough. They are both kettle maker's instruments compared to a stringed instrument or the human voice. Think of the harpsichord: no matter how one hits a key, the volume of the tone is the same and it immediately begins to fade. The piano is not much better; it permits some control over that initial intensity, but the control is momentary, and there is only *one* variable: the velocity of the hammer tossed against the string. The hammer immediately rebounds; the sound immediately fades. How then is such a mechanism to sing? How can it sustain a tone, give it the vibrato of a warm voice, extend it, connect it with the following tone? How can music be coaxed out of this machine, this piece of wired wood?

It is to this problem that the piano industry has devoted its energies for two hundred years, in an attempt to perfect the instrument's technique as the virtuoso perfected his. The earliest instruments, for example, had almost no volume or sustaining power. Anton Reicha told of his aid to Beethoven while he played a Mozart concerto on an earlier instrument:

> He asked me to turn pages for him. But I was mostly occupied in wrenching the strings of the pianoforte which snapped. . . . Back and forth I leaped, jerking out a string, disentangling a hammer, turning a page, and I worked harder than Beethoven.

This tells much about the instrumental technique of the master, but even more about his fragile instrument. Mozart might have been satisfied with the light, slight sound—in fact he praised Johann Stein's earlier instruments—but by Beethoven's time the music demanded more from the instrument, so much, in fact, that many of today's instruments are inadequate. But advances were made. In Mozart's time a knee lever was used to raise the dampers and sustain harmonies, but the Broadwoods, in England, invented the foot pedal, giving the player firmer control over the sound. Broadwood also expanded the range of the piano to six octaves, and built a second bridge for the bass strings so they could be made of thicker wire and create more powerful sound. By the 1820s the instrument gained an iron skeleton that could withstand more string tension than the simple wood frame and permit the projection of sound in larger concert halls. In France, Erard invented the "double escapement," in which the hammer, after hitting the string, did not rebound to the original point of rest but to an intermediate one, to remain there until the key was released; it allowed faster repetition and better response. In 1826, felt was patented as the surface of the hammer; still in use today, it creates a firmer, fuller, more resonant sound than the earlier brittle deer leather. The instrument's technique expanded with its virtuoso's. Chickering invented the cast-iron frame, sounding boards were experimented with, and Steinway established what was essentially the modern instrument; string tension was more than doubled to over twenty tons.

In 1867, the fourteen-year-old American Steinway astonished Europe. It received gold medals at the Paris Exhibition over the oldest European firms. Berlioz called it "beautiful and rare," and Rossini said, "It is a nightingale cooing in a thunderstorm." From its origins as a piece of wired wood, the piano had become an awesome mechanism of twelve thousand parts, with a key and hammer assembly that looked like a Rube Goldberg contraption; and the sole purpose of the complex system was to overcome its own mechanics, to be an instrument that could sing.

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The evolution of the instrument, then, mirrored the evolution of the virtuoso out of early middle-class labor. So, too, each virtuoso, like each instrument, passed through a technical assembly line to become a polished, sophisticated machine.

When a player lifts a simple violin to his chin, he dominates it and seemingly dissects its musical possibilities as if it were part of his own body, a muscle whose sole purpose is to sing, at any pitch, any volume; it can hold a tone, suddenly let it drop and slowly build its intensity again while sliding into the next note; it can twist the listener through journeys into microtones. The piano, the most complex and intricate machine ever invented to create music, can do none of these things. Yet a player approaches its solid mass as a supplicant. The pianist at the keyboard meets his mechanical equal; his tendons are mirrored in the levers and strings within the case. If he masters the instrument, they merge. The piano was invented to overcome its origins, and hide its construction; each added bit of machinery was intended to make the instrument less of a machine, more of an organism. The pianist, with his body and singing voice, seeks to become more like a machine, building routes and circuits into his fingers and ears. But that machinery's sole purpose is also finally to efface itself; it permits the pianist to meet the other machine so they can both transcend themselves and their origins.

III

But how, then, does the body play the instrument? Where does the music come from? From fingers that strike plastic keys? Tossed hammers striking metal? Constant dying falls of fading tones? The greatest physical technique is only a potential for physical freedom. The most sophisticated piano still cannot sing and remains a percussive mechanism. How can the pianist follow Liszt in his transcendent intention? "The pianist," he said, "must send the form he has created soaring into transparent ether: he must arm it with a thousand winged weapons; he must call up scent and blossom, and breathe the breath of life."

The meeting of the player and the instrument: how does it take place? The language is always that of lovers, of union. Burney wrote about Handel's playing: "His touch was so smooth and the tone of the instrument so cherished that his fingers seemed to grow to the keys." Thalberg revealed his secret of singing tone: "The greatest possible volume of tone must be drawn, . . . never by roughly striking the keys, but rather by catching them closely and deftly, and pressing them down with power, decision, and warmth."

How does the pressing become song? C. P. E. Bach advised, "Lose no opportunity to hear artistic singing." Mendelssohn agreed: "You will learn far more from [good singers] . . . than from any players you are likely to meet with," or perhaps from any player's comments. Schumann said that a pianist was "being musical" when "you have taken music not only into your fingers, but into your heart and head." In a recent phenomenological investigation into jazz improvisation, *Ways of the Hand*, David Sudnow expressed his puzzlement: ". . . had I been able to jump into the keyboard with my tongue, matters would have smoothed out. . . ."

For my part, I had difficulty just learning the compositions. Gradually, though, with practice, the music became easier; muscles were freer, the scales smoother. As I worked I began to feel the notes "in the fingers." One of the first pieces I loved and came to know well, the Bach Fugue in E-flat Minor from the first book of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, required months of work before my hand knew the basic movements that would accurately articulate the three complex voices. Without following the score too closely, my fingers had to know where to go; the fingerings had to be figured out, and then drilled, four or five notes at a time.

In my lessons I learned some rudimentary physical methods of "singing" the voices in the fugue: how to use the sustaining pedal to slightly overlap sounds into a legato, how to use the fingers to replace the use of the pedal. In a Chopin nocturne, the right hand had to play a long, sustained melody, but a note would lose its power before the next one arrived; I learned to listen to that drop in intensity, and to measure the intensity of the following note so that it lifted out of the decay of the preceding one, while the left-hand harmonies, in their subtle shadings, were used to give a single note the warmth

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and coloration of a voice. I learned varieties of touch, ways to hold the hand, ways of using my arms and avoiding tension in my wrists. I learned, too, to plan phrases, to taper off, calculatedly, a Mozartean sigh. Slowly these matters began to require less thought; they too were in my fingers. It was as if the piano's mechanism was at last being overcome. The keyboard was not attached to levers and hammers, but was a warm flexible surface that reacted to the motions of my hand and put me directly in touch with the sound.

Learning a composition well meant that my body had absorbed it. What seemed difficult and awkward became natural, as if the music were growing out of my body. Schnabel taught: "There is only one good technique, whether you ride a bicycle or swim or whatever else you do, and that is to attain a maximum achievement with a minimum of effort. That applies to all physical activity." In fact, I played best when trying least. In a Schubert sonata my left hand had to leap two octaves in an oompah rhythm. But each time I played it, I would strain for the notes and miss them; my arm would become tense, the rhythm slack. "Leap," my teacher told me, "leap the way a cat leaps"; that is, with complete ease, knowing its destination; the knowledge of its path does not rise out of calculation, but through a body fraught with instinct. I did not have to acquire skill, I often felt—just lose some obstacles. When my left hand did "leap," my muscles were relaxed, the notes were accurate, the beat was steady, the rhythm supple.

If the physical movements were becoming easier, and if any music at all was emerging from the caverns of the piano, it was not solely because of my technical exercises. My ear was learning to play along with my fingers within the keyboard; and while physical work helped produce music, listening for the music eased the physical work. The listening guided my fingers through the voices of the Bach fugue and directed the delicate touch I used in the nocturne. I was learning to work not only on my own muscles, but on the piano's, on the sinews of sound that responded to my fingers' movements.

I found that I could not even hum a short melodic passage I had been practicing for weeks, that I never clearly heard what I was playing. A tape recording shocked me. Is that my playing? Why are the notes disjointed? Where does that voice lead? What happens there to my rhythm, my dynamics, my phrasing? The sound was uncannily familiar—I had heard myself play the music hundreds of times—and disturbingly strange. Even professional artists occasionally play for a coach, not being entirely certain about what is being sounded. For me it was essential. I went to lessons nervous and excited. Each week I tried to practice in order, as Liszt said, to wash my dirty linen at home. But in the lesson all the weaknesses were clear under the pressure of the moment, and when the teacher went over the music with me, showing me what I had and hadn't done, my ears learned along with my hands. "Did you know you made a crescendo here, but the next note was lost? Listen to it again. Relax your shoulders."

I listened to the tone as well, seeking the penetrating, intoxicating sound I had heard in others. I began to carry the sound of the instrument with me, and became impatient with poor pianos. I found a Steinway whose sound was intense, warm, and sustained, and I could hardly enjoy playing on another instrument. But the ideal tone was not an abstract sound; it was a part of the character of each composition. So I learned to sing with different tongues. Each one changed my physical relation to the keyboard and my aural relation to the music.

Finally, all aspects of playing—the technical, rhythmic, tonal, the body posture—made sense only in the context of a given composition. I felt that when a composition is known, and has been thought through, planned, and understood by the mind, ear, and body, it becomes a personal possession—personal because it involves the entire person, in all aspects; also personal because it reaches to one's most inner parts; it becomes a mirror of the thinking and feeling player. The most recent composition with which I came closest to this preparation was Chopin's Ballade in G Minor. From the opening declamatory bars to the torrential coda, the music became my own. Before I played it, it was anticipated in my body and ear; I could feel it compressed, in all its components, into a single physical possibility that would unfold in time. In playing and thinking about the music, my body

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became a physical model for the score; black marks on paper became subtle movements of muscles; the composition existed for me in a state of physical and musical possibility. In this state, the composition demanded to be given; the possession had to become a gift; the private and personal asked to become public, to be shared as music.

I imagine that after many scores have been absorbed, after years of playing and living with music—far more, doubtless, than I shall ever have time for—one creates a body and a self that are fully open to the possibilities of the piano and its music. I have had intimations of such a state. When I was practicing every day, my musical sensibilities were taut; my fingers would move, on a table or in the air, as if freed from some physical confinement, stretching, reaching, imagining the music within. When I listened to music, I not only heard it but felt it, in the fingers, along the arms, in the shoulders, like a conductor preparing to signal to his players. If I passed a keyboard I was compelled to play. It was as if, as Schumann said, the music spoke within my fingers and heart and head.

There were people who, when they first saw a man on horseback, believed man and horse to be a single animal, a centaur. I like to think of the pianist at his keyboard as a musical centaur, a body and mind and ear so well trained, so close to the selected instrument and its music, that the body is ripe with the instrument's possibility, and the instrument speaks with the player's voice. Such moments are rare. I have only glimpsed them, infrequently and fleetingly. But those are the moments in which the history of the instrument and my personal history collapse into the music. All that labor and industry, hundreds of hours on a single work, labor resonant with the industry of a musical and pianistic tradition, with social struggles and personal discipline—all can be seen in the player sitting at the keyboard. At those moments both instrument and player merge to transcend their middle-class origins; through their music, they become universal.

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Review Essays

The Origins of Scholarship

ANTHONY GRAFTON

HISTORY OF CLASSICAL SCHOLARSHIP FROM 1300 TO 1850. *By Rudolf Pfeiffer. Clarendon Press. $16.50.*

Since the turn of the century, those interested in the history of classical scholarship have had to turn first to the monumental work of J. E. Sandys, *A History of Classical Scholarship* (1903–1908). This book, informative and well written though it is, suffers from three defects. First, it is based for the most part on the research of others rather than on direct study of the sources—and even as a compilation it was not accurate or complete by the standards of the time when it was written. Second, it is not a historical work except in the sense that it is chronologically organized. It shows, as Rudolf Pfeiffer has written, "no leading idea, no coherent structure, no sober discrimination between the transient and the perennial." Nor does it analyze the changes in the wide social, cultural, and political environment within which scholars must work, or the effects of that environment on their methods and their interests. Third, it is not a history of scholarship but a history of scholars.

Sandys was not primarily interested in tracing the paths by which scholars arrived at novel results in the study and interpretation of ancient sources. Rather, he wished to provide the classical student with brief biographies of the most eminent scholars of the past. For the modern period, he wrote, "a history of scholarship must necessarily to a large extent consist of notices of the lives and works of individual scholars." True, he went on to say that "in the case of the more important names, some estimate of the value of their services will naturally be expected." But the very fact that he subordinated the analysis of scholars' works to the description of their lives shows that he was intent on producing not a history but a biographical compendium.

Nevertheless we shall still have to turn to Sandys. The second volume of Rudolf Pfeiffer's *History of Classical Scholarship* covers only the period from Petrarch to Lachmann. Pfeiffer has decided not to treat the scholars of ancient Rome or those of the Greek and Latin Middle Ages; nor has he discussed all the minor scholars of modern times whose names litter the pages of Sandys. But he has given us something much better than a new work of reference—namely, the first real history of classical scholarship in the modern world. His work is centered, as it should be, on the development of ideas about the ancient world and of the technical methods for its study. True, he also discusses the lives of individuals and the wider cultural background of their work, but he has done so only insofar as it is necessary to explain their scholarly achievements. Unlike Sandys, he has thought long and deeply about what scholarship is and about the reasons why it came into being. This book provides us with a distillation of his thought.

For Pfeiffer, classical scholarship has always meant the criticism and explication of texts. "To edit texts," he wrote more than forty years ago, "is the philologist's first duty; to interpret them is his next and highest one." In particular, it is the interpretation of those texts that have shaped and defined the culture of Western Europe: the poetry of the

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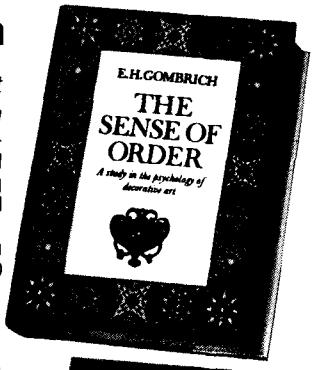

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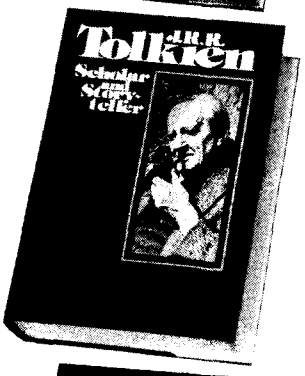

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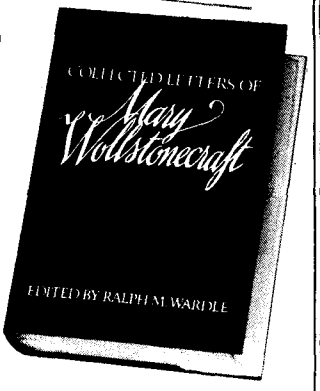

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Greeks and, to a lesser but still vital extent, the Bible. Scholarship first came into being, and has since developed, not as an independent entity, but in response to larger changes in society and culture. Pfeiffer sees these changes, and the corresponding changes in scholarship, as following a recurrent pattern. In Alexandria, again in fourteenth-century Italy, and again in eighteenth-century Germany, great poets felt the need to revivify the poetic languages of their nations. To do so, they turned to the intensive study of the classics; and in order to gain the direct and accurate knowledge that they needed, they were forced to correct and explain the classical texts available to them. They learned to look for better manuscripts, to correct the manuscripts they had by conjecture, to gather information about obscure references and unusual words in the texts. The poets and writers who engaged in these activities—Callimachus, Petrarch, Winckelmann—are for Pfeiffer the true creators of scholarship.

Both in the ancient and in the modern world, the growth of secular scholarship was followed by a parallel growth of religious scholarship. In the Alexandria of the Fathers and in the northern Europe of Agricola and Erasmus, men came to believe that Christianity must be enriched by contact with the classical heritage. On the one hand, they clothed the truths of Christianity with all the splendor of classical rhetoric; on the other hand, they applied the critical methods of pagan scholars to the classical texts of Christianity: the Bible and, in the later period, the Fathers. For Pfeiffer, then, scholarship changes its nature when great writers or religious thinkers decide to renew their work by contact with a world that is ancient but never out of date: the world of Greek poetry and of the Bible, which he sees as a unity.

To be sure, Pfeiffer knows that political, social, and economic factors play a part in the history of scholarship. Indeed, he repeatedly points out that scholarship has developed most rapidly when, as in Alexandria and in sixteenth-century France, it has been supported by royal patronage. But he sees patronage as a sustaining rather than an initiating force. The invention and the refinement of scholarship were the work of great individuals. The study of the wider context helps us to see why such men attracted disciples, why some of them were able to organize great collective enterprises, and why the results of their work were preserved. But only the careful study of great men can shed light upon the major changes in the scope and nature of scholarship.

Pfeiffer also knows that scholarship involves more than the study of literary texts. Eratosthenes in Alexandria, Scaliger and Wolf in modern times studied every aspect of the ancient past, *Realien* and institutions as well as texts and their history. But Pfeiffer's admiration for such activities is clearly mixed with a certain amount of suspicion. For as scholars' interests have broadened to include subjects far removed from literature, their studies and their results have also tended not to affect the literature of their times, at least directly. And as scholars come to see the world of the ancient classics as clearly different from their own, as something of historical interest rather than the center of their own culture, scholarship loses what is, in Pfeiffer's view, its chief reason for existence. In consequence, Pfeiffer tends to be less concerned with such men's wider interests per se than he is with the contribution of those wider interests to the reading of texts.

Pfeiffer's book is a splendid achievement. It rests on deep and direct study of the primary sources, the classics of modern European literature as well as those of technical philology. It is informed by a deep knowledge of the general cultural history of Europe. It is well supplied with documentation, including detailed and critical references to the vast modern secondary literature. It is written in a lucid and cultivated English prose. And it makes available to students and to scholars a reliable broad introduction to the history of classical scholarship in the modern world.

Part I of the book treats the Italian Renaissance. The story begins with a great poet, Petrarch, the first man in a thousand years to be captivated by the beauty of the language of the ancients. We see him studying the texts of Vergil and Cicero in a new, critical fashion and imitating them in his own writings. And we watch a host of other humanists as they take up, sustain, and extend Petrarch's achievements. Pfeiffer carefully shows how the political and cultural life of the Italian city-states helped to make classical studies profitable and attractive. With Valla, scholar-

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The 1978 Phi Beta Kappa Book Awards

The Ralph Waldo Emerson Award

THE RISE OF AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY: CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS, 1860–1930. *By Bruce Kuklick. Yale University Press. $17.95.*

Citation: "This splendid book analyzes, in a clear and graceful manner, the changing conceptions of American philosophy during a period in which academic philosophy in the United States came almost to be equated with Harvard. The title of this book is fully justified by the prominence and pervasive impact of philosophy at Harvard. It is, first and foremost, a superb piece of intellectual history in which basic philosophic ideas are spelled out and analyzed. Furthermore, the book goes beyond a concern with ideas to an inquiry into the societal, and particularly the academic, context from which they emerged. Thus, the book contains a penetrating examination of the rise of academic specialization, and its various consequences—disciplinary specialization, departmentalization, bureaucratization, academic entrepreneurship, and a decline of the public, almost ministerial, role of the philosopher. In this illuminating chapter in the history of American higher education, Kuklick sensitively examines a wide range of societal issues, such as the role of academic nativism and anti-Semitism, the mystique of the Harvard gentleman-scholar, the abhorrence of political 'radicalism,' and, tragically for the department, the impact of World War I. In making judgments about the quality of the persons about whom he writes, Kuklick has fulfilled his obligations as a critical scholar, and in doing so has produced a most distinguished and humane piece of scholarship."

The Christian Gauss Award

PERSON, PLACE AND THING IN HENRY JAMES'S NOVELS. *By Charles R. Anderson. Duke University Press. $12.75.*

Citation: "In this perceptive and intellectually sustained study, Professor Anderson's examination of James's art becomes the illumination of a major aesthetic movement. Going on from what James made so much of—the ancient idea of 'the spirit of the place'—in focusing on the manner in which the environment works upon human sensibilities, Professor Anderson shows how James was developing perspectives the French Impressionist painters were revealing to the world. Going further, he shows how James achieved what is not within the power of painting, representing through language and narrative the processes of the comparable modulations humans effect in each other. The poise and grace of the writing give the final distinction to this splendid study."

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MECHANICS OF THE MIND. *By Colin B. Blakemore. Cambridge University Press. $24.50. Paper, $7.50.*

Citation: "Professor Colin B. Blakemore's *Mechanics of the Mind* is so well written and interesting that once one starts to read it, it is hard to put aside. Adhering to Lord Rutherford's conviction that, somewhere along the line, scientific advances should be made intelligible to the barmaid at the local pub, Professor Blakemore has made his book about the complicated field of brain research not only superbly intelligible, but absolutely fascinating. He accomplishes this by putting problems about the brain, none of them simple or easy, into the perspective of history, noting their relations to philosophy, literature, and art, and then telling how, in his judgment, they stand today in the light of past and current research and thought. That, along with a flowing, apt style, is how he manages to inform, stir, and excite the reader about localization of diverse functions in the brain, about the body-mind problem, consciousness and free will, about sleep and dreams, about memory, learning and language, about the complex relation of vision to external reality, about mental illnesses and the collective mind of society."

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ship becomes an independent field of study, with its own methods and its own ends; with Politian, Western scholarship begins the long attempt to recover and understand the culture of ancient Greece.

Part II treats the Northern Renaissance. Pfeiffer shows how the religious revival known as the *devotio moderna* inspired the development of a new, Christian humanism, exemplified by Erasmus and his circle. Pfeiffer carefully explains Erasmus's method of New Testament exegesis and his program for publishing new editions of the Bible and the Fathers. Drawing on his own earlier pioneering studies, he shows that Erasmus's refusal to join the Protestant reformers in their break with the Catholic Church represented not a repudiation of his earliest and innermost convictions, but their logical consequence.

Part III follows the development of scholarship after the Renaissance. It shows how yet another *poeta doctus*, Jean Dorat, gave impetus to the study of Greek poetry in order to create the new French poetry of the Pléiade. The new Greek scholarship of Dorat and his pupils—above all, Scaliger—brought with it both gains and losses. These men raised the sophistication of philological method to a new level. But in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when an increasingly technical philology based on Greek sources became divorced from the service of wider cultural movements, scholarship degenerated into a sterile polymathy.

Part IV shows how Winckelmann tried to renew German culture by direct contact with Greek culture, with the plastic arts as well as with literature. Others took up Winckelmann's program, and, thanks above all to F. A. Wolf, a new idea of classical scholarship took hold in Germany. Wolf and others, following up ideas advanced long before by Scaliger, came to believe that the ancient world must be studied as a whole; that all the remains of ancient culture, material as well as literary, must be collected and examined if the ancient world was to be understood. Pfeiffer clearly lays out Wolf's program for a new *Altertumswissenschaft* and his revolutionary work on the textual history of the Homeric poems. The book closes with a brief examination of some of the main achievements of German scholarship in the nineteenth century: B. G. Niebuhr's reconstruction of early Roman history, K. O. Müller's historical interpretation of Greek myth, the work of Ahrens and others on the historical study of language, and Lachmann's development of a new method of textual criticism.

Those who have read Pfeiffer's earlier essays on the history of scholarship (many of which are gathered in his *Ausgewählte Schriften*) will be struck by the consistency of his thought. Pfeiffer has always argued, as he argues here, that "value-free" scholarship is inevitably valueless. He has always insisted that humanity and tolerance have characterized the great scholars of all ages, and he has always prized the evidence of friendships among them. He has always shown historical understanding and human sympathy for all periods of the past. And he has always shown intolerance for shoddy thinking and bad scholarship. One need not agree with Pfeiffer on every point of fact or emphasis. He seems to me to exaggerate the humanity and tolerance of some of his subjects—notably J. J. Scaliger. His insistence on the primacy of poetry as the subject of scholarship is at least open to question—though, as will become clear below, I do not believe that the question can be answered at present. But one can only respect the vigor and integrity of a man who has spent a lifetime defending against barbarians of all kinds the humanity of the Greeks and the liberal Christianity of Erasmus.

It seems to me that this book leaves the reader with questions of two kinds. First of all, there is a question about the book's origin. Unlike the art historians of Aby Warburg's school—with some of whom, especially F. Saxl and E. Panofsky, Pfeiffer has had close relationships—the best known German classical scholars of the last hundred years have not devoted much serious thought to the recent history of their discipline and its place in Western culture. How, then, can we explain the phenomenon we find here—that it is a German classicist who has presented us with the first comprehensive reexamination of the place of classical scholarship in modern European culture? Second, there is a question about the state of the study of the history of scholarship. Where does Pfeiffer's *History* leave us? As is inevitable in a work that covers so long a period and so broad a field, he has not been able to support his thesis with the wealth of quotation and textual analysis that

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he brought to bear on Hellenistic scholarship in the first volume of his *History*. What remains to be done to fill in the splendid outline he has traced? I shall try to answer these two sets of questions briefly here.

Pfeiffer was born in Augsburg on September 28, 1889. The son of a distinguished Catholic family, he spent his first years in the house that had once belonged to the humanist Konrad Peutinger. He attended the Humanistisches Gymnasium beim Benediktinerstift St. Stephan in Augsburg and the University of Munich, where he studied both classical and Germanic philology. He received his doctorate in 1914 for a dissertation titled *Der Augsburger Meistersinger und Homerübersetzer Johannes Spreng* ("The Augsburg Meistersinger and Translator of Homer, Johannes Spreng" [1914]). By examining the character of Munich scholarship in the years when Pfeiffer was a student there, we shall go far toward understanding the directions that his interests have taken. For Munich scholarship was very different from the scholarship of northern Germany; indeed, it could hardly have been more unlike the dominant scholarly tradition of Berlin.

For the fifty years leading up to World War I, Munich philologists were distinguished above all by the breadth of their interests. Munich remained a center for the study of the ancient world per se. But it also became a center for the study of the afterlife of the classical heritage. Michael Bernays, the immensely popular and influential professor of German literature, never completed his planned study of Homer's influence on European literature. But his lectures infected his students with an interest both in the influence of the classics on modern literature and in the history of technical classical scholarship. His younger friend Ludwig Traube founded the modern study of paleography and of the history of classical texts in late antiquity and the Middle Ages. He also gave exemplary lectures on the history of his discipline and of classical scholarship in general. Karl Krumbacher's *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur* traced the first clear paths across the wilderness of later Greek sources. His *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, whose first volume began with a witty criticism of the narrowness of traditional German scholarship and a ringing call for international collaboration, did more than any other institution to create professional standards for the study of Byzantium. The students and friends of these men carried on their interests. A. Heisenberg continued Krumbacher's work; F. Boll and K. Borinski took up Bernays's unfinished investigation into the afterlife of Greek literature; P. Lehmann, E. A. Lowe, B. L. Ullman, P. Joachimsen, L. Bertalot, and a host of others continued Traube's investigations into the classical culture of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

There were a number of points on which all of these men agreed, and on which all of them were in disagreement with the scholars of northern Germany. All of them realized the complexity of the paths by which the classical heritage had been handed down to posterity. All of them knew that one could not confine the study of the histories of texts, or that of the histories of ideas, to what had befallen them during antiquity. All of them—and here, above all, they were unusual—recognized that scholars outside Germany, especially in Italy and France, had much to tell the Germans about the afterlife of the classical world and how to study it.

When Pfeiffer came to Munich in 1908, Bernays was long dead and Traube recently so. Krumbacher died in 1909. It was a relative newcomer to the Munich chair of classical philology, Otto Crusius, who introduced Pfeiffer to the local scholarly tradition. And he did so by putting the findings of earlier Munich scholars in a context rather different from what most of them had intended.

Crusius is best remembered now as a papyrologist and student of the Greek paroemiographi and collectors of fables. But his interests were much wider than his published writings—always fragmentary and unsatisfactory—can show. He was an inspiring lecturer on Greek poetry and a pioneering student of Alexandrian scholarship. It was, no doubt, to him that Pfeiffer owed his first contact with Aristophanes of Byzantium. Above all, Crusius was devoted to the historical reassessment of the tradition of classical scholarship in Germany.

Crusius was passionately convinced that mainstream German classical scholarship had taken a wrong turn in the last hundred years. He refused to accept the view—which he attributed to Wilamowitz—that ancient culture

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must simply be understood historically, as the product of a specific historical context. For Crusius, Greek literature was of eternal value. The scholar's duty was not merely to study the ancient world but to arrive at a direct emotional experience of it, which could in turn serve to enrich the art, music, and literature of his own time. Crusius hoped, for example, that the primitive, popular wisdom of the Greek fables could help his own contemporaries to combat "the increasing artificiality and mechanization of life." His description of Erwin Rohde, the great historian of Greek religion, has an autobiographical ring: "He believed . . . that Antiquity had a special mission, one that was by no means merely 'historical,' and he always persisted in that belief." Crusius also believed that this view had been shared by the great German teachers and classicists of the early nineteenth century, above all by Wilhelm von Humboldt. He insisted that German classicists should study the works of Humboldt and his contemporaries and attempt to put into practice their ideal of classical scholarship and education. In short, he tried to make German classicists subject their discipline to a historical reconsideration, not merely for the intrinsic interest of the study but in order to revitalize the nation's educational system and, so he hoped, its culture.

Crusius's teaching was designed to make his students share his ideals and his historical vision. Not only did he insist that they master the classical texts, and the whole complex history of those texts in later times; he also strongly advised them to study the methods and results of M. Bernays, of Traube, of Krumbacher, all of whom he held up to them as models. They must also study the works of the greatest classical scholars of the past. Only by doing so could they learn how great men attack a difficult problem:

> Just read the studies of Bentley, above all his *Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris*, or take up Lessing, whom we are proud to call one of us. . . . Individual results can be superseded, but the spirit of the research and the form of its presentation remain exemplary (*Wie studiert man klassische Philologie?* ["How to Study Classical Philology"]).

Indeed, he went so far as to argue that only those who had studied the great philologists of the past, and seen how they reacted to and used the classics, could hope to become real scholars:

> Ask yourself . . . if you feel an intimate relationship with the life-forces that have preserved ancient culture. He who must answer no can perhaps become a fine linguist or palaeographer; he cannot become a philologist.

Crusius appealed to scholars as well as students. He was uncomfortably aware that the French had done more than the Germans to trace the vicissitudes of manuscripts during the Renaissance and after; he remarked once that French scholars were "our leaders and teachers in this field." To remedy this situation, he tried to give those German classicists who were interested in the history of the classical tradition access to space in publications. As editor of *Philologus* he extended the journal's scope to include the history of the classical tradition. He joined O. Immisch and Th. Zielinski in founding the monograph series *Das Erbe der Alten* ("The Heritage of the Ancients"), which he edited. He frequently lectured with great power on the history of classical scholarship. And he demonstrated by his own work how the subject should be treated in a way that would attract both scholarly and general readers. He wrote a solidly documented and sensitive life of Rohde. And in the cultural section of a Munich newspaper, he told for a wide public the story of Martin Luther's discovery that the fables attributed to Aesop were not the work of a single historical figure but the result of centuries of accretions, like the German folktales of his own time. Crusius's precept and example proved effective; some of the works that he inspired, such as Rudolf Hirzel's concise history of Plutarch's afterlife, are still standard.

If we turn back to Pfeiffer's dissertation on Spreng, we shall see at once how deeply Crusius influenced his student. The book begins with a self-deprecating quotation from Nietzsche, whom Rohde had defended against Wilamowitz (Nietzsche to Deussen, June 22, 1868: "For your education choose the most difficult and beautiful problems; for a dissertation, however, only a modest, out-of-the-way little corner, nothing more"). It ends with Pfeiffer's thanks to Crusius for "scholarly inspiration of the most varied and

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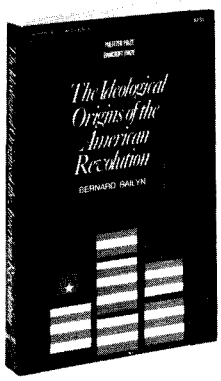

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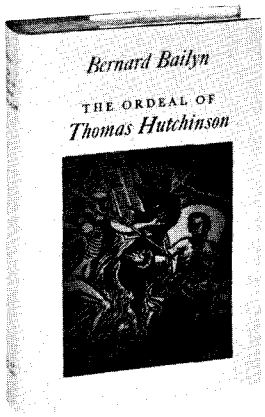

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profound kind." And its subject, the effect of the translation of Homer on German vernacular literature, also clearly springs from Crusius's teaching. In this work we see many of Pfeiffer's characteristics fully formed. There is the remarkable knowledge of the scholarship of the humanistic and baroque periods as well as of the classics. There is the insistence that the classicist's standards of accuracy and precision must apply to the student of humanism as well. There is the historical insight that enables Pfeiffer to distinguish clearly between the motives that led humanists to translate Greek texts into formal, classicizing Latin and those that impelled a Meistersinger like Spreng to reproduce Homer in the jingling German verse of the sixteenth century. Above all, there is the conviction that the history of classical scholarship is an essential part of the history of Western literature, and of Western civilization in general:

> This lengthy investigation can easily be justified. Of all problems of translation, that of Homer is one of the most important and most controversial, one which every age must pose and try to solve in its own terms.

The general orientation and inspiration of this work were clearly owed to Crusius, though the method with which it was completed was Pfeiffer's own. Sixty years later, the same general orientation and the same set of questions still inspire Pfeiffer's *History*. It reveals the same rigor in the study and interpretation of sources, the same breadth and depth of reading. In a sense, Pfeiffer has answered Crusius's call for a historical reconsideration of German scholarship by mastering and applying all the tools forged by Traube and other Munich students of the classical tradition. It is no accident that his new *History* ends with a hostile reference to Mommsen as the one who "did more than anyone else to further the forces of historicism and realism"; after all, it was in reaction to those forces that Crusius originally turned for inspiration to the German past.

Again, it is no accident that Pfeiffer sees the study of poetry as the central business of scholars. In the world of his youth, Crusius was only one of many who hoped that German culture could be renewed by direct contact with Greek poetry. Anyone who hopes to understand the origins of Pfeiffer's interests must remember his beloved lines from Stefan George:

> *Eine kleine Schar zieht stille Bahnen*
> *Stolz entfernt vom wirkenden Getriebe*
> *Und als Losung steht auf ihren Fahnen:*
> *Hellas ewig unsre Liebe,*
>
> ("A small band goes its quiet ways,
> Aloof from everyday affairs;
> The motto on the flags they raise
> Says love of Greece is ever theirs").

He must also recall the fervent hopes that so many scholars and critics placed upon the George circle. But here too, Crusius was of capital importance. He was a living example of the scholar inspired by his direct contact with the Greek sources of Western culture to take part not only in research and teaching but also in the literary, artistic, and political life of his city and his nation. To a considerable extent, Pfeiffer has tended to feel special affection for those early scholars who most resembled his master and his master's models, and to regard their work as crucial. Pfeiffer's predilections have perhaps led him to underestimate the importance of the study of prose texts. But the gains they have brought far outweigh the losses. Without them we should not have had his unsurpassed portraits of Petrarch, of Goethe, of Wilhelm von Humboldt.

Pfeiffer's book is not, then, merely the exceptional work of a great scholar. It is also the product of a specific tradition in modern classical scholarship, as interpreted and redirected by Pfeiffer's teacher, Crusius. It does honor not only to its author but also to the unforgotten world which speaks to us from it—the lively, cosmopolitan world of Munich before the collapse of German culture.

What, then, do we need to do in order to fill in Pfeiffer's outline? It may be simplest to begin with what we do not need. Above all, we do not need more studies based on secondary sources. We already have a history of *The Classical Heritage and Its Beneficiaries* (R. R. Bolgar, 1954), a collective study of *Greek Scholars in Venice* (D. J. Geanakoplos, 1962), a historical sketch of the editing and printing of *The Classical Text* (E. J. Kenney, 1974), and a compact but most informative *Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature* (*Scribes and Scholars*, by L. D.

(Continued on page 256)

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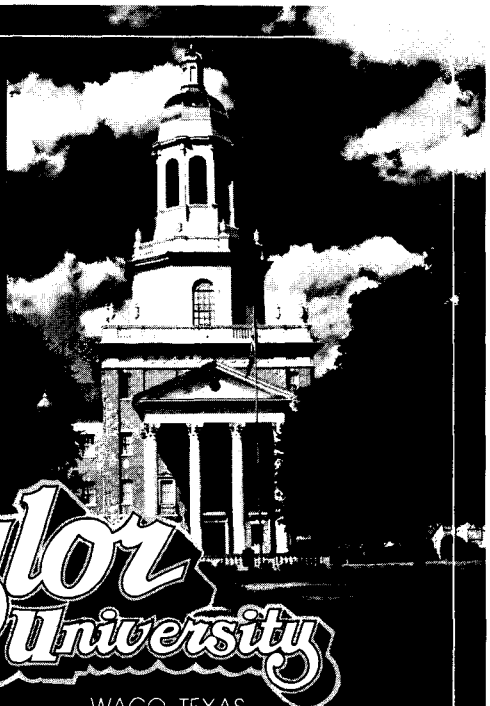

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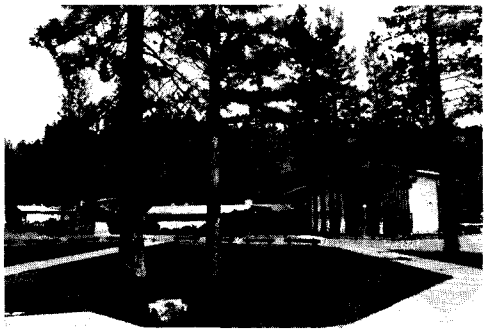

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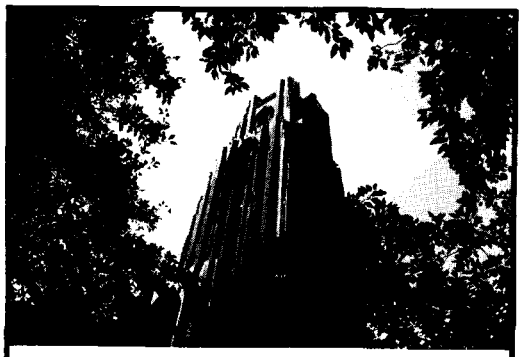

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(Continued from page 246)

Reynolds and N. G. Wilson, 1968, 1974), all based on secondary sources. Each of these works has certain virtues; in particular, all of them are helpful for teaching purposes. But none of them adds much to our knowledge, and all of them suffer from the simple but unavoidable fact that in many areas there are no competent secondary sources to draw upon. Where there are no good monographs, there can hardly be good syntheses. Further progress in the history of scholarship, like progress in any field of historical research, depends on further study of the original sources. And in a subject where so few of the individual trees have ever been identified, it is hardly reasonable to continue making blurred long-distance photographs of the forest.

Second, we do not need any more studies of classical scholars that treat their subjects' technical books as something to be leafed through rather than read. All too often, even in recent books, one comes upon those two infallible signs that scholarly works have not been analyzed: detailed aesthetic appreciations of their title pages and careful sums of the number of pages or articles they contain. Scholars like Guillaume Budé and Daniel Heinsius—to name two who have recently suffered from this treatment—were famous in their own time and remain interesting to us, not because of their friendships with others or their political activities, but because they obtained new results in the study of the ancient world. We want to know what their results were, and how these were arrived at. We want to know not merely that Budé compiled an enormous dictionary of Greek and Latin prose usage, but how he went about doing so and how good a job he did. Or, to put it more generally, we want to know not only what early scholars thought about the *studia humanitatis*, but how they practiced them. After all, editing, translating, and commenting on texts were the activities on which such men spent by far the greatest part of their time and energies; to shirk studying their practical work is to abandon all hope of understanding what their lives were like.

Third, we do not want any more analyses of what early scholars said about proper philological method. The French and Italian treatises of the sixteenth century on the study of ancient history, the confused and unreliable pamphlets by Robortello and Scioppius on the art of editing texts, the writings of the nineteenth century on the idea of *Altertumswissenschaft*—all these works have been surveyed, summarized, and analyzed time and again. It is hard to see how further studies can teach us much more of value about them.

What we do need, first of all, is a body of accurate descriptions of those scholarly works that achieved new results or—sometimes for unsavory reasons—enjoyed large reputations for doing so. There are already models for

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imitation in this area: W. Allen's brief but admirably lucid study of how Erasmus's friend Beatus Rhenanus edited the texts of Tacitus and Livy (*Speculum* 12, 1937, 382–385); K. Krautter's original and informative study of the elder Beroaldo's enormous commentary on Apuleius (*Philologische Methode und humanistische Existenz,* 1971); and, in the closely related field of legal studies, H. E. Troje's richly detailed study of a vast number of humanist editions of, and treatises on, ancient legal texts (*Graeca leguntur,* 1971). But we need many more such works, which will examine technical philological works in all areas: editions of, and commentaries on, texts; monographs on archaeology, institutions, epigraphy, numismatics. We need honest reports on the literary and typographical form of such works, on the methods of source criticism and argument employed by their authors, and on their relation to the various ancient models for works on philological subjects. We need editions of a number of unpublished works. Here the pattern has been set by Professor Perosa's students at Florence, who are bringing out in near-exemplary fashion the surviving notes from the university lectures of Angelo Poliziano, the most technically innovative scholar of the fifteenth century. We also need modern critical editions of, and commentaries on, the most influential early published works, such as G. Pozzi is providing for Ermolao Barbaro's great textual commentary on Pliny and A. Perosa for Poliziano's *Miscellaneorum centuria prima.* And we need, perhaps even more urgently, an anthology of selections from the most influential scholarly works from Petrarch and Valla down to J Bernays and Lachmann, which would go far to transform the history of scholarship into a workable teaching subject.

At the same time, we cannot merely study single works. Even the best such studies entail a risk that the treatises they describe will be overvalued, simply because a modern analysis of them is available. Beroaldo's Apuleius commentary was only the crest of a tidal wave of commentaries on classical texts poured forth by the humanists of later fifteenth-century Italy. Thanks to Krautter's book, however, it has been singled out by some scholars as a radical departure—as "the earliest real philological commentary of the humanist period that was printed" (J. H. Waszink)—a judgment that would have surprised both Beroaldo and his rivals. Moreover, those who study only one or two works all too often commit the easiest and most seductive fallacy for the historian of scholarship. That is, they judge early works in the light of the methods now used in the same field. Such presuppositions inevitably lead to distorted results. Either the early scholars appear to have followed a substantially modern "méthode de critique textuelle" (as J. Ruysschaert argued for J. Lipsius in 1949), or they appear to have been rather inept gentlemen who failed to arrive at solutions which are obvious to any modern scholar (as Kenney argued for almost all early scholars in *The Classical Text*). Both approaches are, of course, unhistorical and unjustifiable. Moreover, it is impossible for those who read only a few early works to form a clear idea of the different groups of scholars who were at work in the period being studied, or even of the styles of attack upon a given problem that were available at a given time. Even if they avoid committing fallacies of anachronism, therefore, it is still almost inevitable that they will remove the works they study from their historical contexts, and that their results will accordingly be of limited value.

It seems to me that we need at least three further kinds of study if we are to avoid underestimating or overestimating the originality of a single book or a single scholar.

The first kind of study is also probably the most common: the study of the fortunes of particular texts or writers over a long period. By following the different ways in which scholars edit, interpret, and draw upon a given classical author, we are inevitably led to see how methods change over time. The popularity—or unpopularity—of an author at given periods helps us to locate scholars' most pressing concerns; the identification of the points they choose to explain or correct is the most effective single key to evaluating the sophistication of their work. A. D. Momigliano has provided model studies of this kind for the afterlives of two historians, Polybius and Tacitus (*Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography,* 1977). A vast amount of information on the fortunes of many Greek and Roman authors is now easily accessible in the three volumes of Kristeller's and Cranz's *Catalogus translationum et commentariorum.*

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But for the most part this territory has been mapped out only in the roughest and most general way. For a hundred years the received opinion has been that until 1614 all Renaissance humanists saw the Hermetic corpus of magical texts as a genuine relic of primeval Egyptian philosophy; but F. Purnell, Jr., has now shown that the authenticity of the corpus had come under suspicion as early as the 1560s (*Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 6, 1976, 155–178). And we can expect many more such surprises as new areas come under detailed scrutiny.

A second kind of study centers upon the history of a particular discipline or subdiscipline within the larger world of classical studies. Here we have model studies by L. Traube on the history of paleography (in his *Vorlesungen und Abhandlungen*, I, 1909); by O. Gruppe on the study of ancient religion and myth (*Geschichte der klassischen Mythologie und Religionsgeschichte*, 1921); by E. Iversen on archaeological decipherment (*The Myth of Egypt and Its Hieroglyphs in European Tradition*, 1961); and by S. Timpanaro on textual criticism (*La genesi del metodo del Lachmann*, 1963; German translation, 1971). But much room remains for further work. R. Weiss's *The Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity* (1969) provides only a brief introduction to the early history of archaeology, numismatics, epigraphy. And in such fields as chronology, the study of Greek and Roman public law, and the study of relations between the ancient Near East and the Greek and Roman world, still more remains to be done.

A third kind of study—until now perhaps the least common—deals with the history of scholarly problems. For example, it is often most revealing to survey the history of the interpretation of specific passages. By doing so one is able to judge the levels of sophistication of different scholars' methods with great precision and, in some cases, to obtain results that help to invalidate the clichés which still govern our estimates of early scholarship. S. Timpanaro's article "*Atlas cum compare gibbo*" (*Rinascimento*, N. S. 2, 1951), still the best example of such a study, revealed that Poliziano was by no means always more methodical or insightful than Calderini and Merula, the predecessors whom he despised and whom we wrongly tend to ignore. On a larger scale, H. J. Erasmus has surveyed *The Origins of Rome in Historiography from Petrarch to Perizonius*. This work not only traces changes in the interpretation of a number of specific passages, but also reconstructs in detail the development of historical source-criticism from about 1300 to about 1700. And J. M. Levine has reconstructed with much wit and learning the eighteenth-century controversies over a particularly fascinating material relic, *Dr. Woodward's Shield* (1977). But many more such studies are needed.

These categories are not exhaustive. The leading journal in this field, *Italia Medioevale e Umanistica*, has published articles that fall into all three, and others that bridge two or more. And the most original—and certainly the most informative—work on the history of scholarship in many years, Silvia Rizzo's *Il lessico filologico degli umanisti* (1973), falls entirely outside them. This lexical study assembles and classifies the technical terms that the humanists used in reference to the production, critical evaluation, and emendation of manuscripts and printed books. Since many of the terms are ambiguous and deceptive, Rizzo backs up her definitions by analyzing in detail dozens of passages from humanist writings in which specific text-critical problems are discussed and particular manuscripts, many still identifiable, are dated and evaluated. By doing so she is able to establish her definitions beyond doubt; more important, she also provides what amounts to a detailed critical introduction to the nature and history of textual criticism in the Renaissance. And valuable works of many other kinds can readily be imagined.

One general suggestion may be in order. It is probably unwise for either classicists or historians to tackle any of these problems on their own. Classicists, particularly in England and America, tend to ignore the contexts within which early scholars worked. They assume that technical disciplines were as independent of outside influences in the sixteenth or seventeenth century as they are today. But this assumption is unjustified. After all, even historians of the exact sciences have come to realize that the disciplines they study did not develop in isolation. Similarly, Hans Aarsleff, a historian of linguistics, has recently shown that many of Saussure's most characteristic

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technical theories were derived not from earlier linguists but from the general philosophical system of Taine. The moral that Aarsleff draws from the episode seems highly relevant to the history of classical scholarship: "It is not surprising that the innovative turn in linguistics should have an extra-linguistic impulse. Established systems are not likely to renew themselves by their own devices. . . ." Surely it is not likely that humanistic studies were more isolated than linguistics or the exact sciences from other disciplines, or from broad changes in the surrounding culture. At the very least, it is wrong to make such an assumption before the evidence is in. Historians, on the other hand, tend to shirk the duty of assessing the results at which early scholars arrived. Rightly or wrongly, they often regard themselves as unqualified to judge interpretations of the ancient sources, and they impoverish their work by avoiding the problem of doing so. Surely some way could be found to combine the virtues of the two disciplines while avoiding their vices. It certainly seems possible that interdisciplinary collaboration and, even better, interdisciplinary training of research students could be carried out successfully.

In the desirable but unlikely event that the kinds of studies I have mentioned actually begin to appear, we will gain a detailed understanding of the method and character of classical philology during the period between Petrarch and Lachmann. We may then begin to move from description to explanation. For even when we have reconstructed the schools, plotted the generational changes, and allotted to each book its proper praise or blame, we shall still have to move from the texts to the historical reality that lay behind them. We shall still have to explain why individual scholars did what they did—to learn what their motives were, what social and psychological forces drove them to produce their works.

Here too some tasks suggest themselves. First, there will be a task of decoding. It is hard to read and learn from early scholarly works. But it is even harder to learn anything useful from the prefaces and open letters in which scholars expressed their motives, explained the meaning of their own works, and evaluated those of others. The contents of such works are severely restricted by the conventions of the *ars epistolica*—or, in more recent times, by the conventions of academic discourse. For the most part they consist in a *bricolage* of platitudes and stereotyped formulas to which it is nearly impossible to attach any specific meaning. Similarly, scholars' assessments of one another generally take the form of extravagant praise or wild abuse; in place of analysis one often finds merely a set of wildly exaggerated epithets ("eagle in the clouds," "bottomless pit of erudition"). Professor Kenney has already alluded to the problems posed by such texts in his paper in *Classical Influences on European Culture, A.D. 500–1500* (edited by R. R. Bolgar, 1971). Perhaps we shall have to borrow an approach from the historians of art. Michael Baxandall has recently shown that a detailed lexical study which juxtaposes humanist discussions of the visual arts with the pictures to which they refer can attach some specific meanings to the frustratingly vague and abstract art-critical terminology of Renaissance Latin. Perhaps it would also be possible to establish correlations between particular topoi, anecdotes, and epithets on the one hand and specific modes of scholarship on the other, and so learn to decode prefaces and letters with some measure of security.

Second, there will be a task of biographical explanation. We shall have to set both philological works and their prefaces into the context of the lives of the scholars who wrote them. We shall have to decide how to analyze the interaction between external circumstances and internal development, between social and cultural context and mental states. Here we may wish to draw upon a most original recent book by F. F. Blok, *Caspar Barlaeus: From the Correspondence of a Melancholic,* which describes and analyzes the mental breakdown and eventual suicide of a seventeenth-century scholar. Blok proceeds by subjecting the letters of Barlaeus and his friends to minute textual analysis; he then applies modern psychological theory to the facts so established. The resulting story is both tragic and paradoxical. Blok shows how the well-intentioned attempts of Barlaeus's friends to help him—mostly in the form of elegant Latin exhortations to cheerfulness—served only to deepen his depression until he could bear it no longer. Both Blok's penetrating reading of refractory texts and his

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modest and thoughtful application of analytical methods drawn from the social sciences may well serve as models when we come to write real biographies of scholars—biographies that will integrate the specialized histories of their methods and results into their life histories.

Third, it will be necessary to reconstruct the social context of classical scholarship. We shall have to study the history of classical education in modern Europe, for the needs of the schoolroom and the university have done a great deal to determine both the subjects and the methods of classical research. We shall also have to reconstruct the history of classical publishing; for the existence of channels for publication and the development of technical innovations in the presentation of classical texts and monuments have helped to shape the contents and methods of classical research. In particular, we shall have to investigate the origins and development of technical classical periodicals in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For they did more than any other institution to assemble students of the ancient world into a professional community governed by something resembling a consensus of opinion about the proper methods to be followed in editing and interpreting the sources. And, above all, we shall have to investigate the social origins and status of classicists, in order to establish the patterns of recruitment into classical studies and to locate the position of classical scholars in their society.

Finally, there will be a task of integration and synthesis. We shall have to assemble all of our detailed findings into a full history of classical scholarship. Such a history will have to pose and answer the complex question whether the structure of classical scholarship is a direct reflection of the social structures of the countries where it has been practiced. It will have to determine the role played by such factors as nationalism, religion, and race in the development of philological method. And it will have to assess the effects of philological research upon literature, religion, and, in some cases, society and politics.

It is presumably obvious that this synthesis will form a crucial part of the history of the classical tradition in a broader sense—that is, the history of Europe's dealings with the Jews and Greeks to whom we owe our understanding of the world, man, and God. For we can hardly hope to assess the role of classical influences in the culture of any age before we know which texts were read, and where, and why, and with what methods. When we have written the synthesis, we shall have filled in the outline that Pfeiffer has given us here. Only then will we be able to test his thesis about the origins and nature of scholarship. Perhaps I need not say that this will not happen soon. But it is necessary to say that we can hardly hope to produce a history so lucid, so humane, or so inspiring as Pfeiffer's, and that he has once again put us permanently in his debt.

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Meditations of a Political Man

ERICH HELLER

TAGEBÜCHER 1933–1934 (DIARIES OF THE YEARS 1933–1934). *By Thomas Mann. Edited by Peter de Mendelssohn. S. Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt am Main.*

There is a surfeit of books on the history of Hitler's coming to power; on the conditions, in and around the Weimar Republic, that made it possible; on the Führer's psychology, mentality, and actions, his accomplices, his cunning and success; his defeat, his suicide, and the end on the secret funeral pyre amid the rubble of his devastated capital. The picture emerging from those histories is terrible enough, although the sobriety of learning, the minutiae of research, or the quasi-philosophical digging into the soil of Germany's religious or intellectual past from which the "Movement" supposedly grew, cannot possibly succeed in evoking and conveying the epochal uniqueness of its horror. Few are the books that may do so. These have been written by victims whose testimony has survived even if they themselves have not; or, still more rarely and with unavoidable imperfections, by men deeply rooted in the classical, humanistic German tradition who, horrified, contemplated its end with strength and sensitivity and tried to say what it was like. With unavoidable imperfections, for what happened in Germany defeated the imagination and eliminated the distance the mind needs in order to articulate what it experiences. Authors and readers were bound to suspect that for once the facts had triumphed over language. "Words fail . . . ," the cliché of all mourning, became the true response to contemporary history, and the speaker felt that in the end he was left with the vain task of speaking the unspeakable.

It is this that makes it almost impossible to tell the next generation the truth about the monstrous affliction. Still, there are books that, in their very different ways, may teach something of the unteachable lesson: *Tag- und Nachtbücher* of the Catholic essayist Theodor Haecker; or *Die dritte Walpurgisnacht* by the Viennese satirist Karl Kraus, with which, avoiding publication in his lifetime, he broke his first promise to remain silent ("Ich bleibe stumm"—for what else was possible where, as he wrote, "the word had died"?); or Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus,* the book for which he had to invent a narrator whose naïveté enabled him to tell the story and who was yet sophisticated enough to doubt his ability to comprehend what he reported; or, more recently, Paul Roubiczek's *Über den Abgrund.*

Many passages in Thomas Mann's *Tagebücher 1933–1934,* the first installment of the pages and pages registering the events of his life between 1933 and 1955, the year of his death, show that long before the culmination of the German terror he too, even as early as 1934 (there were still years to go before Auschwitz), suspected that the experience would be indescribable. He speaks of the paralysis of language, of its refusal to yield words commensurable with the crimes committed by the new rulers of Germany, and questions his power to express what they inspire in him: an utmost of indignation, abhorrence, and contempt. It is utterly repugnant to him, he writes, even to write the word "Hitler," "the name of that monstrous creature that has now become 'historical.' " And

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how to "argue" about the coffins, vertically placed in rows, in which select inmates of the concentration camp Oranienburg were forced to stand for hours on end? And is he, Thomas Mann asks, still competent, at the age of fifty-eight, to judge an epoch to which, perhaps, he no longer belongs and from which, at times, he intensely yearns to escape? Indulging such paralyzing suspicions, he yet finds some comfort in the thought of one day, despite it all, writing something (at that time he still thought it would be a mere novella about Faustus) that would not be an argument or an essay but would give him the freedom symbolically, not discursively, to represent the state and destiny of Germany and Europe. It was to become the vast novel *Doctor Faustus.*

After an evening spent in the company of a fellow refugee in Lugano (and many, many more evenings of this kind were to follow in Switzerland and America), he notes that the inexhaustible, never-to-be-concluded subject of their conversation was the nauseating madness of those who hold power in Germany and whose abominations leave only two possibilities of bringing about their downfall: financial catastrophe or a lost war. He devoutly wishes even the violent consummation, and declares himself ready for every sacrifice and suffering that this would impose on him; for no ruin would be too high a price to pay for bringing down this *ne plus ultra* of infamy: "It was left to the Germans to produce a revolution as had never been seen before: an insurrection against everything that is good and decent, against freedom, truth, or justice; and all this with the ecstatic support of the masses who believe that they have opted for it and are not yet allowed to realize that they are being deceived with cunning and fraudulence; and, standing apart from them, the few, among them Conservatives and Nationalists, who know that all will end catastrophically."

This is the diary entry of March 27, 1933, and it would be unjust and untrue to deny that this is the dominant tone of all his utterances about Hitler's Germany. Yet there are strange, very strange, exceptions. Some of them are undoubtedly motivated by deep-rooted antipathies, personal and literary, against some of those who are now his fellow exiles: the philosophical essayist and journalist Theodor Lessing, for instance; or the radical leftist writer Kurt Tucholsky; or, before all others, the Berlin critic Alfred Kerr, whom he has always looked upon as Shakespeare looks upon Iago. More than once he speaks of the embarrassment that such fellowship of exile causes him, and it is easy enough to account for it—as easy as it is to appreciate the comfort he finds in the thought of Hermann Hesse's living outside Germany. Approvingly he quotes Hesse as saying, in March 1934, that if he had the power to determine the foreign policy of the French, they would now cross the Rhine and win a war against Germany that in a few years they are not unlikely to lose. But how to account for an entry (April 10, 1933) in which, after his accustomed angry and more than angry response to the day's German news, he asks whether there is anything left of the promises of the "Revolution" and continues with words that put one in mind of a skidding vehicle that is hopelessly out of control: "Well, the Jews. . . . It is, after all, no disaster that Kerr can no longer indulge his mischievous and poisonous *Vermauschelung* of Nietzsche" (meaning the adaptation of Nietzsche's style to an idiom characteristic of linguistically not-quite-emancipated Jews). "And the same may well apply to the *Entjudung* of the judiciary." One wonders what is more repugnant here—the opinion that the removal of Jews from the legal professions of Germany may have its merits or the word "*Entjudung,*" which belongs entirely to the verbal armory of Hitler, "that monstrous creature," and his helpmates. And this is followed by the confession of "secret thoughts, agitated and strenuous." "Certainly," he writes, "there is much that is repellent, mean and in a higher sense un-German in this new Germany. But I am beginning to suspect that what emerges might have two sides to it."

The second side shows through another page of the diary. Once again it has to do with the anti-Semitism of the German burgher and of the young Thomas Mann in particular. This is the kind of anti-Semitism that is not an exclusive German property, although in no other Western nation did it become as abominable as it did in Germany. (This surely also applies to the new regime's ferocious nationalism, a distant relation of the libertarian and patriotic uprising against Napoleon.)

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The entry in question is dated December 25, 1933. The Mann family had celebrated Christmas on the previous evening, an evening that he spent with his Jewish wife, half-Jewish children, a visiting Jewish actress, and her sister: the first Christmas in exile, in Switzerland, not far from the borders of pogrom-minded Germany. The children were asked what they had liked best among the Christmas offerings. Their unanimous answer: Papa's mimicking of a Jew. Papa, it seems, was at least as successful in the histrionic "*Vermauschelung*" of the German language as was, involuntarily, the hateful Kerr. What an extraordinary performance, surprising in execution and even more so when reported in a diary which its author knew would one day be published! For the diaries he had written between the beginning of his exile and his death were carefully ordered and preserved, first by himself in 1951 and after his death by his daughter Erika. The three parcels prepared by himself were inscribed in his own hand: "Daily notes from 1933–1951. Without any literary value, but not to be opened by anybody before 20 years after my death." The fourth and final section was wrapped up, sealed, and almost identically inscribed by Erika. Obviously they were meant for posterity (with the denial of their "literary value" meant to immobilize "literary criticism"). Thus they escaped the fate of the diaries he wrote during the years before 1933. He himself destroyed them. Their story is not without its dramatic accents, particularly the adventures of those from the period 1896–1933. The diaries of his high school (*Gymnasium*) years, "dear to him" and "faithful," the only recipient of his youthful poetic exercises, he burned in February 1896, thus "ridding himself of his past," as he wrote to his closest friend, but also because he judged them immature and as "frivolous and falsely sentimental" as if they had been written by that "Pseudo-Parisian." He meant Hermann Bahr, acknowledged at the time as the center of a wide circle of writers, most of them domiciled in Austria. (This early rejection of Bahr not only shows his sound literary judgment, but also foreshadows his later dislike of the Kerrs and Tucholskys.)

Yet this "liberation" from his past did not last long. Almost instantly he must have begun building up a new one. A letter, written in March 1896 to the same friend, speaks of his doing nothing except "working a little" for "my diary." The whole compendium that accumulated between 1896 and 1933 he cremated on May 2, 1945, in Pacific Palisades. Many anxious weeks had passed in 1933 before he recovered what he later destroyed. He had, of course, left the diaries behind when, on February 11, 1933, he departed from Munich in the company of his wife Katia to deliver his lecture on Richard Wagner in Amsterdam, Brussels, and Paris. This lecture provoked, upon Hitler's coming to power, a protest of several musical—and also not *that* musical—German personalities of the "Wagner City" Munich. Among them were the conductors Furtwaengler and Knappertsbusch and the composers Hans Pfitzner and Richard Strauss. It was a ludicrous indictment of Thomas Mann's unreverential, "un-German" treatment of Germany's musical genius, a denunciation that in itself would have made his remaining in Germany very precarious. As it was, the question never arose. Thomas Mann, persuaded by the events of the "Revolution," by his older children and some of his friends, did not return, although at the beginning he seemed determined to do so. The diary (March 3, 1934) reports that this was prevented only by his wife's conviction that it would be a fatal mistake. As it was, he never again saw his Munich house, which—as he believed, for the short time of his absence—he had entrusted to the care of one of his sons, Golo, now a well-known German historian and publicist, and to the domestic personnel.

"Took a sleeping tablet with the camomile tea. The suitcase is standing in the room"—this is the diary note of a year later (March 15, 1934), written at the end of a brief stay in the Swiss winter-sport resort Arosa (he had chosen a place near Zürich as his "permanent" domicile). The sleeping tablet as well as the suitcase assumes the quality of a symbol for Thomas Mann's existence during the first years of his unpremeditated exile. But it was not only his homelessness and the ever more outrageous news from Germany that filled him with great apprehension. There was also, during these first months, the mounting fear that the diaries of the many preceding years might be read by unauthorized persons. Early in April 1933 he wrote to Golo, the only mem-

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ber of the family who still lived at home, about this delicate matter. The letter contained the key to the safe in which the diaries were kept, and the urgent request to forward them to him in a trunk without, he implored, perusing them. Golo did what he was asked to do, but he did not himself take the trunk to the railroad station. This was to be done by the trusted chauffeur of the family. Yet in actual fact that treacherous young man delivered the trunk into the hands of the secret police. Small wonder it did not arrive within the normal time! Thomas Mann was beside himself with anxiety. On April 30 he confided to his new diary: "During these days I am worried—almost exclusively—about this conspiracy against the secrets of my life. These are weighty and profound. The outcome may be terrible, indeed lethal." No other passage in this volume evokes so much biographical curiosity. It has to be resisted. Yet there can be little doubt that the gravity of Mann's fears was caused by the possibility that not only political, but above all erotic, secrets would be revealed.

Still, after persistent interventions by his Munich advocate, the autobiographical trunk arrived at the end of May, substantially intact. The apprehensive episode shows how quickly conditions in Germany worsened after this first spring. Even a few months later, nothing would have persuaded the Gestapo to release their prey. It took a long time before Thomas Mann could part with these "incriminating" papers—twelve years; and even then he kept several of them. Before the California auto-da-fé he sorted out what he had written between September 1918 and December 1921. It was the time in which his troublesome "reactionary" *Meditations of a Non-Political Man* were published, the time of the German upheavals that came in the wake of the lost war, of his republican "conversion," and of his taking up again *The Magic Mountain*, the novel that had been interrupted by the intellectual labors imposed upon him by the First World War. The diary notes 1918–1921 were found when the 1933–1955 parcels were opened. Peter de Mendelssohn, the all but incredibly conscientious and successful editor of the present volume (this reviewer has discovered hardly any errors or omissions in the more than 150 pages of notes, which provide brief biographies of

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practically every person mentioned by Thomas Mann and the context of practically every more important episode) is most probably right in assuming, in his introduction, that Thomas Mann saved those diaries for *Doctor Faustus*, the book in which the period in question plays so big a part.

Some of these diary entries had even been published before: in the private and limited edition of the slender volume *Leiden an Deutschland*, Los Angeles, 1946. To compare the original—that is, the diaries now available in their entirety—with that little book means to become, once more, intensely aware of the insecurity and unsteadiness of Thomas Mann's political judgments. This time they concern Soviet Communism. At the time of the Leipzig trial of the presumed incendiaries of the *Reichstag*, he had noted (November 24, 1933) that the absurdities of that judicial performance revealed "the affinity, indeed the identity of National Socialism and Communism." Both are expressions, he says, of "one and the same historical and political world." What they have in common is, above all, the unrelenting enmity against any form of parliamentary democracy and the humanistic tradition. True, one year later (December 20, 1934) it is "the world's phobia of Communism" that is absurd. The private occasion of the remark: the passport difficulties of his son Klaus on account of his participation in a writers' congress in Moscow. Only the French proved different from the other Western bureaucracies. Their praiseworthy response was: "Vous êtes écrivain comme votre papa? Tout s'arrangera." In 1946, when Thomas Mann published *Leiden an Deutschland* (that, after all, consisted essentially of excerpts from the diaries of 1933 and 1934), the change of mind was a little less privately motivated and certainly more radical. The passage noting the affinity between National Socialism and Communism was left out and replaced by a determined denial of it: "'Fascism or Communism—it makes no difference?'—Nonsense. Although Communism would not provide the right atmosphere for me to live in, it would allow me to exist, would not bestially kill me, indeed we would mutually respect our humanitarian concerns. . . ." Stalin was then in charge of the humanitarian concerns of Soviet Russia. But the psychology and literary diplomacy of Thomas Mann's friendly gestures toward Communism and his "fraternization" with its East German representatives when his books were printed and read again on both sides of the internal German border, would have to be shown in an important chapter of his biography.

Diaries—the present volume reveals the extraordinary importance they had for Thomas Mann. To keep a diary was an obsession with him, and this despite the absence from them of any substantial or preparatory notes for his literary works. For this purpose he kept notebooks. No, the diaries had the function, as he once rather cryptically said, of "prayer-like communications that might afford a measure of protection," and were, at least theoretically, meant to be made public. Yet when the danger arose that some of them might become known, he was alarmed, and not only because the "weighty and profound secrets" would embarrass or even fatally endanger others. When he read to his wife parts of his mock-epic *Gesang vom Kindchen* and she was "very moved and only felt uneasy about my disclosing most intimate things," he retorted in the diary note of January 10, 1919 (from the saved section of that period's pages): "But the most intimate is at the same time the most universal and the most human. I know no such scruples." This, if taken literally (and Thomas Mann did take it literally in *Doctor Faustus* when he used the character of his mother and the suicides of his sisters—novelistically, it is true, but almost undisguisedly), is the extreme consequence of naturalism and psychologism. For as soon as its restraints turn to "discontents" and its discretions to "hypocrisy," any higher culture is being deprived of its existential minimum—because any higher culture *is* an encroachment upon what that diary note means, or may mean, by "the most universal and the most human." Thomas Mann, in giving that diary reply to his wife, certainly was unmindful of the fact that such disregard of "the private" would do away with—had already abolished?—civilization itself. For when civilization itself is beginning to be felt irksomely to encroach upon the universally human, it is mortally sick. This is so because the truth of any culture lies in the refinements of its selectivity and thus in its tactful disregard of much that is "natural."

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Selectivity is not what Thomas Mann, in his addiction to the habit of keeping diaries, cultivated. True, all human experience is inescapably selective; if it were not, it would be utterly chaotic. Yet the spontaneous, all but unconscious obedience to a certain mode of selection is what gives personal confessions their suprapersonal validity. This is true of Saint Augustine and even of Rousseau, although he inaugurated the sensibility that tends to accept any experience, if only it is "truly personal," as "significant" and "authentic." In his entry of February 11, 1934, Thomas Mann seeks to explain, even justify, his devoted work as a diarist: "I love to give some duration to the fleeting day . . . not so much in order to remember it and to read it again as in the sense of confession, conscious recapitulation and responsible vigilance." Although that declaration is certainly compatible with much that is interesting, fascinating, and "historical" in this volume, it sounds inappropriately highfalutin as soon as one tries to reconcile it with the many, many tediously repetitive trivialities that it records. To be sure, it may well be advisable to be "responsibly vigilant" with regard to the exact measure of sleeping tablets, one or one and a half or even two (in the end the pharmaceutical trade name "Phanodorm" has assumed for the reader the quality of a magic conjuration, the antidote, almost, of the enemy's parole "Deutschland erwache!"); but why, one asks, "give permanence"—in simple prose, not in rhymes à la Wilhelm Busch—to a painful dental treatment, a visit to the barber, the tonsillitis or bronchitis of a child, the drainage deficiencies of a hotel in Locarno, or every kind of digestive upset—all very "mähnschlich," as *The Magic Mountain*'s Clavdia Chauchat would have said, but hardly deserving the writer's "conscious recapitulation" or the attention of posterity. In their repetitiveness such entries even tend to reduce to absurdity that total affirmation of life's every moment demanded by Nietzsche's doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence, not to mention Thomas Mann's own leitmotiv technique. Or may they not even join, at times, the dreaded "conspiracy against the secrets of my life"?

But there is one leitmotiv, pervading the whole book, that amply justifies its publication. It is a theme hardly touched upon by

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books on Hitler's Germany, even when their authors find its victims' submission incomprehensible or even reprehensible. Nor is this theme discussed in the *Diaries*, but it is *shown*, revealing one of the most abhorrent aspects of that abhorrent "Revolution": it imposed a destiny, which only heroes would have the strength to challenge, upon human beings who, by their history, their nature, their upbringing, their conduct of life, were utterly unprepared for the exercise of heroism. Achilles slaying Hector, Brutus murdering Caesar, the assassination of Wallenstein or the guillotining of Louis XVI—all this assumes the aspect of almost edifying horror as soon as the imagination is reached by the slightest hint of the fumes of Auschwitz. Let kings be decapitated, tyrants murdered, heroes killed in battle—it seems to happen in accordance with a noble code of the spirit; or this at least is what one is tempted to feel when faced with the annihilation of utterly defenseless people: lawyers, doctors, teachers, writers, bank clerks, grocers, workers, tailors, cobblers, all leading peaceful if strenuous lives, looking forward to the success of their children, or the next vacation, or tomorrow's meeting with a lover, or the tranquillity of their retirement, and all without the slightest suspicion that one day they might have to pass the ultimate test of character or fall into the hands of a police that would herd them together in concentration camps, only because they were Jews, or Socialists, or exceptionally ardent believers in Christ. It is sheer indolence to expect heroic deeds of such victims, and reproach them for not being heroes. On the contrary, it is this absolute incongruity between the nature of the unnatural outrages and the nature of those who suffered them, and suffered them not at the hands of criminal perverts but at the instigation of a monstrously sovereign government, that is the ultimate horror—and the leitmotiv of Thomas Mann's *Diaries*.

Thomas Mann knew he was not born for the kind of life in which history now called upon him to prove himself. More than once he confesses in his *Diaries* how difficult it is for him to live, as it were, against the grain, against his burgher soul's hankering after a settled existence and its being much disquieted by the prospect of prolonged emigration. If his Tonio Kröger was morally offended by the "gypsydom" to which he felt condemned as an artist, the "green wagon" betrayal of his respectable burgher inheritance, then Thomas Mann was now threatened by an even more forcible excommunication. Certainly his itinerant ways were never less than elegant: Arosa, Lenzerheide, Lugano, the French Riviera, Zürich; up to the end of this volume the "gypsy's" route looks rather like the program of an expensive vacation, and afterward, with prolonged stays in Princeton and Pacific Palisades and the final settling down by the shores of Lake Zürich, there is not the slightest hint of poverty-stricken vagrancy. Yet for this heir of a Lübeck senatorial tradition—uprooted once, as he felt, by Art—this second uprooting from the position of being *the* representative writer of Germany was hard to face.

It is the paradox of his life during the two years that are recorded in this volume—a paradox often very irritating—that on the one hand he immeasurably loathed Hitler's Germany (even if he suspected on one occasion that there might be "two sides" to it), and on the other hand could not be persuaded to declare himself publicly. For he superstitiously believed in the chance of his continuing to be published in Germany and read by a public that, at the same time, he cursed for massively conniving at the new political philosophy, indeed in large measure enthusiastically accepting it and the highly unphilosophical ways in which it expressed itself. His livelihood—and not only his intellectual and spiritual sustenance—seemed to him to depend on the possibility of writing for Germans; and anyone who knows the subtleties of his language, its sophisticated irony and complex organization, will understand his shying away from the prospect of having to lead an exclusively translated literary life. He even seems to have had an inkling that his writing would become ever more untranslatably German the longer his angry absence from the German scene lasted, while the brutalization of literary tastes inside Germany progressed. And this is exactly what happened. Compared to the stylistic intricacies of *Doctor Faustus*, written entirely in America, his first novel *Buddenbrooks* (1901)—at the time of its appearance judged to be untranslatable by an intelligent French critic—is child's play

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for the translator. And in comparison with his last book that appeared in Germany between the inauguration of the Third Reich and its collapse—the second volume of the Joseph tetralogy, *Der junge Joseph,* 1934—the third and fourth volumes, *Joseph in Ägypten* and *Joseph der Ernährer (Joseph the Provider),* which were published abroad in 1936 and 1943, more and more live up to what he said of the whole work in March 1934. He said it in one of those notes that refute his warning, written on the parcels containing his diaries: "Without any literary value."

In the entry of March 20, 1934, he quotes Jacob Burckhardt's nineteenth-century prophecy that bad times were ahead for the "educated." Before too long they would have to jettison much of what was dear to them, for it would strike the new generations as a sheer luxury of the mind. The young would probably look upon "us" as the aristocratic expatriates of the French Revolution were looked upon by those to whom they fled: people "prepared only for high living." "True and good," notes Thomas Mann, and applies it to his own estrangement from "this new world" and to his *Joseph.* It is, he says, not only a work of his old age, but "late in every sense," perhaps "too late," luxurious and artistic to the point of mannerism and artificiality, qualities enhanced by the author's self-consciousness. There is some truth in this, despite the exaggerated self-criticism of one who at this point is, as he says, "ready for any historical insight." But if the judgment is valid, it has gained in validity with time. *Joseph in Egypt* is considerably more "luxurious" and "artistic" than *The Tales of Jacob* and *Young Joseph.* Small wonder he did not wish these "late" refinements and subtleties entirely to lead an inevitably impoverished life in a foreign language. But it was not only literary anxieties that caused his refusal to speak out. There were, after all, his house in Munich, his bank account, his library, and his "things"—"*meine Sachen*"—to which he refers again and again: the Hermes sculpture in the garden, for instance, and the chandelier. And indeed his delight at the arrival of some of them, his greeting the writing table like a dear old friend that he had long and painfully missed, are very moving and would be even more so if the thought of some of his fellow writers in concentration camps did not interfere with sentiment. Yes, he was a great and passionately dedicated writer (his love of that table testifies to the dedication) *and,* as he knew as early as "Tonio Kröger," a burgher. He was no hero and no ascetic. Writing one of the diary notes while wearing a dressing gown, he mentions—and finds it worth mentioning—that it was made of silk.

Yet all his prudence, caution, and abstention from any public utterance that would provoke the German regime were, of course, of no avail; and he knew that all would be in vain, knew it as one knows one's mortality—without being able to live by that knowledge. He knew it even when it occurred to him that a letter to those in power might help: he might, as he hoped against hope, buy his deliverance from chicaneries by stressing his indissoluble ties with Germany; and he knew it even though he became more and more attracted to the fantastic plan—a plan finally carried out—of composing an address to Hitler's Minister of the Interior that would explain the circumstances of his being outside Germany, and promise that he would not stay away longer than two years. This would be, he thinks, a kind of application for leave of absence, would eliminate the suspicion that he had fled, and create between him and his homeland the kind of "dignified and peaceful relationship" that he "deeply needs." "This plan is important," he adds as he first mentions it on March 16, 1934. Yet as early as September 1933 he can think of only one reason why he should not do what all his older children urgently want him to do: write a manifesto against Hitler's Germany. "Yes, but the novel, . . ." was his diary reply. *The Tales of Jacob* was to appear in November of that year, *Young Joseph* in March 1934.

At the same time he avidly listens, though with an ample measure of skepticism, to predictions of the imminent disintegration of the German regime or of its reconciliation in a few years with "the better Germany." "This will be your hour," says one of those bad prophets, and stresses with strange logic how important it will prove at the (never to come) future moment that he has remained silent until then.

Of course, he would speak—before long and most vigorously—and it was clear to him that he would, even while all the vigor was pent up in the confused waiting. Thomas

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Mann's intelligence has never been in doubt. Not for one moment would he fail to perceive the utter breakdown of discrimination and judgment in Hitler's intellectual converts, or not be repelled by the stammering enthusiasm, the high-flown prattle of those who, like Heidegger or Gottfried Benn, would assume the despicable roles of babbling party hostesses or philosophical gigolos of the "Revolution" (even if, as in the cases of those two, the moment of recognition would soon arrive). Yet Thomas Mann indisputably tried to come to terms with the new rulers. His state of mind, as he describes it on August 20, 1933, is characteristic not only of himself but of many Germans (and not only Germans) whose conduct during those first months of the new rule was unsure and vacillating.

His own occasion to show it most conspicuously came with that "Protest of the Wagner City of Munich." He was preoccupied at the time with writing a reply to one of its signatories, the composer Hans Pfitzner, his old friend to whose opera *Palestrina* he had devoted a whole chapter in *Meditations of a Non-Political Man*. He even expected that the reply would be published in a Berlin literary journal and, by virtue of its mild and conciliatory tone, bring about an invitation to return (although he was determined not to accept it). The least he hoped for was that the authorities in Berlin would rebuke those in Munich who, with regard to his property, made life difficult for him. Unfortunately, at just that time a German newspaper accused him of "regularly contributing" to an anti-Hitler journal in Holland. His publisher, Jewish and therefore particularly fearful, persuaded him to deny that "rumor" in order not to endanger the publication of *The Tales of Jacob*. Thomas Mann complied, although he knew that he was playing false to the other enemies of the regime and to his own true attitude—and was angry with his publisher. And then it dawned upon him that this perpetual maneuvering between his inner truth and his outwardly accommodating behavior—"the conciliatory melancholy" of the reply to Pfitzner—was, like "the enforced denial" of the "rumor," a symptom of that "hithering and thithering between decidedness and caution," and that this indecision "cannot be maintained much longer." Yet although a few lines later he speaks of the shocks he will have to endure—his house with all that is in it will be confiscated and he will, "*cum infamia*," be deprived of his citizenship—he says that the letter to Pfitzner is "right and important." For it will show what a good German he was and what inhuman Germans his enemies were. Of course, the letter was never published in that once distinguished journal or elsewhere in Hitler's Germany.

The wonder is that two years later, in 1936, there appeared the vast volume *Joseph in Egypt*. Slowly and doggedly he wrote one inspired page after another—and some pages that testify more to his determination than to his genius (but is this determination not part and parcel of genius?)—wrote them between sleepless nights and exasperating sessions in the dentist's chair, between entertaining many tiresome visitors and suffering the anxieties about those inflammable diaries, between abominating the German rulers after dinner and composing conciliatory letters to them after breakfast; between all these and more, he brought to completion his most demanding, longest, and most serene work, the story of *Joseph and His Brothers*. Indeed he was born to be a writer, not a martyr.

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The Bluff That Came Off?

HILLEL J. KIEVAL

RESISTANCE IN VICHY FRANCE: A STUDY OF IDEAS AND MOTIVATION IN THE SOUTHERN ZONE 1940–1942. *By H. R. Kedward. Oxford University Press. $21.*

THE HISTORY OF THE GERMAN RESISTANCE 1933–1945. *By Peter Hoffmann. Translated from the German by Richard Barry. MIT. $19.95.*

RESISTANCE: EUROPEAN RESISTANCE TO NAZISM 1940–1945. *By M. R. D. Foot. McGraw-Hill. $15.*

Günter Grass, in *The Tin Drum*, recounts the adventures of Oskar Matzerath, a Danzig lad of uncertain German, Polish, and Kashubian ancestry. Living through the heat of the Polish-German conflict in this multinational city, Oskar observes the rise of National Socialism among the German population with much skepticism. He is particularly critical of the Nazi parades and the all-too-symmetrical rostrums which adorn the outdoor rallies. One fine Sunday in 1935, the puny and disfigured Oskar, armed only with his toy drum and an intuitive grasp of the ridiculous in adult behavior, does battle with the musicians and the crowds at one such rally.

> The drum was already in place. Supplely and tenderly I manipulated the sticks, imprinting an artful and joyous waltz rhythm upon it. Conjuring up Vienna and the Danube, I beat more and more loudly until the first and second bass drums of the troopers were drawn to my waltz and the kettledrums of the older boys took up my prelude with varying skill. Here and there, of course, there was a diehard, hard also of hearing no doubt, who went on playing boom-boom, whereas what I had in mind was the three-four time so beloved of the simple folk. Oskar was on the point of giving up when the trumpets saw the light and the fifes, oh, Danube, oh, how blue they blew! . . . And when, still energetically drumming, I looked out into the open through my knothole, I saw that the people were enjoying my waltz, they were hopping about merrily, they had it in their legs: already nine couples and yet another couple were dancing, brought together by the waltz king.

When Oskar attempts to vary his waltz renditions with the faster paced Charleston, the outing loses its Viennese calm and degenerates into utter confusion. The crowd disperses in all directions, and the young drummer barely escapes the fury of the SA and SS men who rip apart the rostrum in search of the great disrupter. Years later Oskar ruminates about his past in the relaxed confines of a mental hospital, and tries to determine just where his actions fell on the spectrum of human responses to National Socialism.

> It has become possible for me to see my drumming under rostrums in proper perspective, and it would never occur to me to set myself up as a resistance fighter because I disrupted six or seven rallies and threw three or four parades out of step with my drumming. That word "resistance" has become very fashionable. We hear of the "spirit of resistance," of "resistance circles." There is even talk of an "inward resistance," a "psychic emigration." Not to mention those courageous and uncompromising souls who call themselves Resistance Fighters, men of the Resistance, because they were fined during the war for not blacking out their bedroom windows properly.
>
> . . . But does that make me, as I lie in this mental hospital, a Resistance Fighter? I must answer in the negative, and I hope that you too, you who are not inmates of mental hospitals, will regard me as nothing more than an eccentric who, for private and what is more esthetic reasons . . . rejected the

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cut and color of the uniforms, the rhythm and tone of the music normally played on rostrums, and therefore drummed up a bit of protest on an instrument that was a mere toy.

Oskar rejects the temptation to ensconce himself in the ever-expanding shrine of resistance heroes. Although not completely in his right mind, he has the modesty and good sense to judge his disruptive protests as an expression of eccentricity, not of political dissent. Through this episode, Günter Grass points a mocking and accusing finger at those of us who—though ostensibly sane—masquerade soberly and pompously as warriors of the Resistance.

Yet more than humor and sarcasm lie beneath Grass's dismissal of our pretentiousness. Basic methodological questions, which are crucial to any historical appraisal of the period, are embedded in this literary text. They can be grouped in three broad categories: location, description, and analysis. What does one choose to write about? What, among the plethora of human responses to occupation, defeat, or oppression, might be considered expressions of resistance? How does one organize and present the material that has been chosen? What criteria does the historian apply in judging the success, failure, or significance of these forms of behavior?

Grass, of course, chooses to write about drumming, not as unquestionable resistance activity, but as an expression of disillusionment with man's complacency, of impatience with his penchant for self-flattery. One would expect that the novelist's powers of description—aided by the free sway of the imagination—would surpass those of most historians, and indeed Grass's prose is superb. Yet the novelist in this case seems to be equally concerned with the problem of historical judgment. Not content to conjure up the past romantically, he urges the reader to "cast one more glance beneath Oskar's rostrums," to question his motivations, his effectiveness, and his overall significance. Oskar in the end judges himself harshly. I, for one, think he was a resistance fighter. In any event he accepts the responsibility to judge the past, a duty which some historians—in their obsession with its retelling—forget to honor.

Conditions of the German occupation differed throughout Europe, and the possibilities of active dissent in any given country depended to a great degree on the occupation's scope and severity. For this reason alone H. R. Kedward's *Resistance in Vichy France* would promise fascinating reading. The situation in France was unique even for Western Europe. Her leaders, in the course of burying the Third Republic, signed an armistice agreement with Germany and thereby avoided outright defeat. The entire northern and western coast—southward past Tours and Dijon, eastward past Bordeaux—was occupied by the German army and under the direct control of the *Militärbefehlshaber* in Paris. However, the rest of the country technically enjoyed full freedom of operation, and was subject only to the dictates of the government in Vichy. The newly formed *État français* openly pursued a policy of cooperation with its German occupiers in the hope of earning a favored position in the New Europe. Vichy's eagerness to please the German government even led it to adopt repressive measures, especially with regard to foreign-born Jews, which were actually more ambitious and sinister than those that had already gone into effect in the Northern Zone. Still, the so-called Free Zone was located in the traditional stronghold of republicanism and village socialism, and resisters enjoyed an atmosphere of relatively lax governmental control until the total German occupation of France in November 1942.

At the outset, Kedward confesses to a limited, yet elusive, goal. His is not to be a study of acts of resistance; nor is he concerned with the period after the summer of 1942, at which point resistance activities become relatively easy to identify. Rather, he intends to focus on the very beginnings of resistance attitudes and behavior, to isolate the "process of transition" from acquiescence to revolt.

Kedward devotes much energy to the problem of locating his subject in both its historical and its political context. In his brilliant opening chapters he sets the roots of resistance attitudes in the continuum of French history since 1789, and more specifically in the atmosphere of political confusion and disappointment that had clouded French life since 1936. He portrays vividly the psychological calamity of sudden military defeat and the spontaneous flight of millions from the north in May and June 1940. As many as ten

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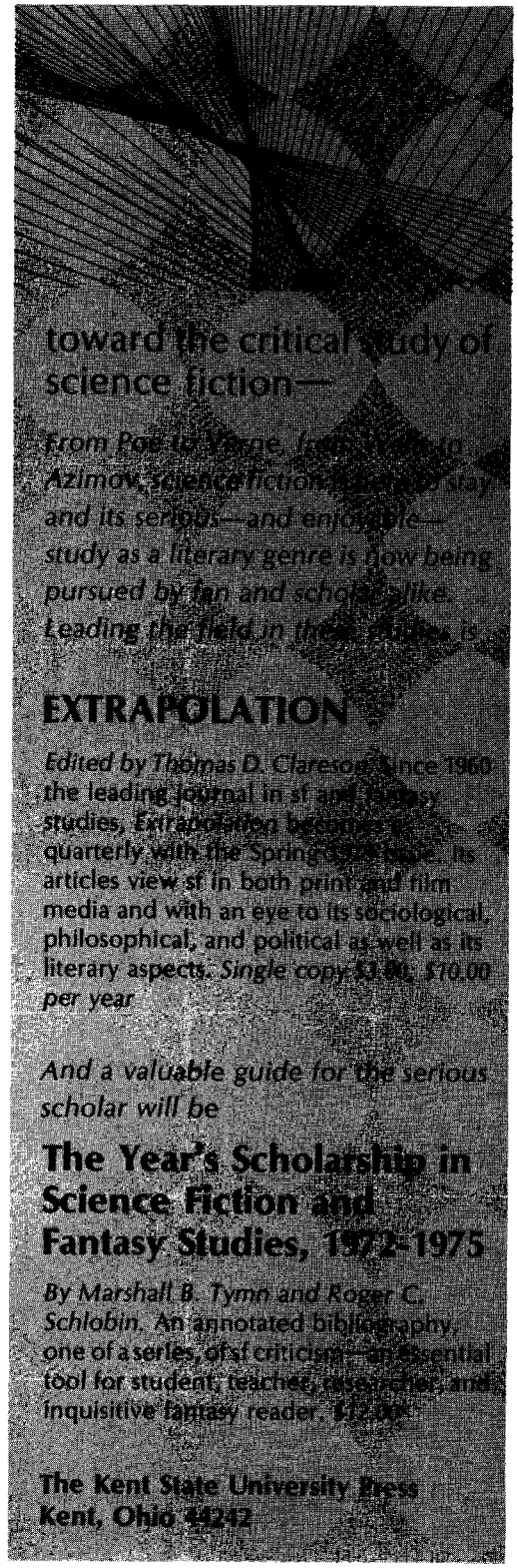
million Frenchmen fled from their homes with as many possessions as they could manage and headed south on bicycles, carts, trains, and foot. Most Frenchmen welcomed wholeheartedly the armistice offered by Pétain; nearly all accepted the *maréchal*'s gift of himself to the nation. The Vichy regime promised an end to chaos and confusion; it promised to make life simple again, to bring back old values and old certainties. Opposition to the armistice and to the German occupation posed a tremendous threat to the hopeful "mood" of Vichy's early days. As Kedward writes: "In so far as Pétainism and *attentisme* were a simple means of avoiding the complexities of the situation, the history of the Resistance is the study of individuals and groups who either perpetuated or reintroduced complexity; for the idea of continuing or restarting the war against the Germans and of developing an alternative to the government of Pétain seemed anything but clear and simple to the majority of people in Vichy France."

The trauma of defeat and occupation did not, in fact, break all continuity with the recent past. The advocates of Social Catholicism, such as the archbishop of Toulouse, Monsigneur Saliège, the dissatisfied elements within the military, and of course the ranks of the French Communist party, all provided a potential pool of resisters to Vichy complicity. Kedward is perhaps too charitable in his assessment of the PCF's silence in the wake of the Hitler-Stalin pact. He argues that by the end of 1940 *L'Humanité* and other communist papers were both anti-Vichy and anti-collaborationist, although they continued to reject further participation in the "capitalist" war. After Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, this last obstacle to full participation in French resistance disappeared.

As Kedward brings to a close his intricate historical introduction, he ends the best part of the book. The rest is, frankly, a mystery: a row of confused chapters in which the author attempts to assimilate and order his source material. Kedward cannot seem to decide how to approach the tasks of description and analysis; this is his main stumbling block. At times he tries to structure his topic by "form" of dissent, at times by "content." Neither rubric holds firm for very long, as each chap-



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ter abandons its stated intent and loses all cohesiveness. The author quite simply lacks a disciplined approach and loses control of his subject as a result. And this inability to hit upon a workable structure prevents him finally from making meaningful interpretations. In the end, we do not know much more about the contours, scope, and success of the early types of resistance in France than we did when the author deposited us in the turmoil of May–June 1940.

The book's conclusions are singularly disappointing. Most could have been anticipated in advance; others were already put forth in the introduction and do not necessarily follow from either the descriptive or the analytic chapters. We learn that resistance attitudes and behavior represented continuity of prewar positions for some, change for others. What had started as a national defeat at the hands of an external enemy turned into a civil conflict directed as much at the Vichy government as against the German occupiers. Finally, the resistance in France not only caused widely differing individuals and groups to coalesce, but also demonstrated the advantages of "collective motivation" inherent in groups with common interests or heritage, such as refugees, Communists, Jews, and regional populations. These are harmless observations that answer no important questions. Kedward insists, for instance, that there were many different "starting points" to French resistance (hence the need for what he calls a "relative chronology" of the phenomenon). But why was this so? What does it tell us about the nature, the seriousness, and the effectiveness of resistance in France? Where *does* the critical boundary lie between acquiescence and revolt?

Kedward operates throughout on the assumption that the establishment of an intellectual climate of opposition and the dissemination of resistance ideas were both important and successful. However, no attempt is made to show where intellectual dissent coincides with other, more "practical" acts of defiance. How do we know that it was more than mere shadowboxing which took place on the sidelines of the real field of play? In the end, Kedward is correct when he writes that by 1942 the resistance had become "an alternate way of life" for many Frenchmen. Regrettably, the reader can only guess why so many people came to adopt this "way of life" and what roads they traveled from convention to dissent.

Peter Hoffmann's *The History of the German Resistance* deals with the country which not only produced National Socialism, but for which resistance did not result directly from defeat and foreign occupation. In most respects it was more difficult to be a resister in Germany than in any other country. The repression and terror that the Nazis unleashed in 1933, combined with the massive emigration of Nazism's opponents and targets, made large-scale dissent virtually impossible. Nearly all the left-wing opposition to the new regime was broken within a few short years—its leaders having emigrated, been placed in concentration camps, or otherwise been silenced. By September 1939, when war with the West finally broke out, resistance to National Socialism had become, in most minds, inseparable from treason against the state.

Hoffmann, unlike Kedward, is not interested in ideology or intellectual motivation. He considers the major secondary works of Hans Rothfels, Eberhard Zeller, and Gerhard Ritter to suffice in this regard. Perhaps they do; in any event they are certainly more satisfying than what passes here as the "history of the German Resistance," yet which is limited to a detailed account of the two main, unsuccessful military plots against Hitler: those of 1938 and of July 20, 1944.

The opening chapters—because they are synthetic and designed to support specific preliminary arguments—are quite good. Hitler's cumulative amalgamation of power in 1933 is summarized in a cryptic yet dramatic style. Hoffmann stresses the importance of the Enabling Law of 1933, which gave the government complete freedom of action without regard to constitutional or parliamentary constraints. He demonstrates how the process of *Gleichschaltung* (coordination, or "bringing into line") eliminated whatever regional autonomy had existed in the Reich, and relegated all institutions and social groups to strict central control. Labor unions and political parties were eliminated, many of their leaders arrested and placed unceremoniously in concentration camps. Before the start of the war, the regular courts alone sen-

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tenced 225,000 persons in "political cases" to terms of imprisonment totaling 600,000 years. Far more numerous, however, were the instances in which detainees were simply thrown into camps without trial or were killed by the police.

Hoffmann points out that in the face of this repression 800,000 Germans between 1933 and 1945 were imprisoned for varying lengths of time for active resistance against the regime. Yet he chooses to focus only on the conservative military opposition. And he sets about to write the worst type of history: a dense, chronological narrative of "events" in which analysis, creativity, and explanation are allowed no room to breathe. He accosts the reader with 800 pages of tedious, leaden prose, which drags along from the Sudeten crisis of 1938 through the summer of 1944—all for the purpose of describing two painstakingly tentative military ventures at coup d'état. Not once does the author pause to consider the differences between palace intrigue—which was abundant in the Third Reich—and resistance activity. The work has no overriding structure, no general line of argument, no specific insights, no interpretation. Hoffmann does not even attempt to tie the book together at the end in the form of a conclusion. No, what we have are "facts": technical points about the amount of explosive material in a briefcase marked for murder; even a scale-model plan of Hitler's Wolfschantze retreat; the dust and dry bones of conspiracies that never came off—but no breath from the historian's lungs to bring the bones to life.

The reader himself must struggle to arrive at some conclusions about the nature of the military opposition to Hitler. Here several features stand out. The first was the tortuous hesitancy of the officer corps to act against the regime, an attitude which seems to have been at odds with its record of subversion during the Weimar Republic. This reticence can only be explained by the officers' right-wing, conservative temperament and by their perception of the Bolshevik threat to the stability of Germany. The enemy on the left—Communist upheaval—was, in their mind, infinitely more dangerous to Germany's future than the National Socialist brand of disorder and sorrow.

Hitler and his men could be tolerated,

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though hardly admired, up to the point that their actions threatened the imminent ruin of the country. And the word "ruin" is to be taken in its concrete sense. The generals feared the physical destruction of German culture and society at the hands of foreign powers. Their resistance rumblings began in 1938, after Hitler had informed them of his aggressive plans against Austria and Czechoslovakia, but were not born out of love or sympathy for the Czech people. Their calculations were cold and pragmatic; unfortunately they were also wrong. Generals Blomberg, Fritsch, and Halder, Colonel Beck, and Dr. Carl Goerdeler were convinced that Britain and France would never permit such sudden German aggrandizement and would form a military alliance against the Reich that would certainly lead to the country's destruction. Beck and Halder made preparations to confront Hitler with a demand for his resignation as soon as the Western powers declared war on Germany. But France and Britain did not move. Neither did the generals, and with the rapid succession of German foreign policy successes, they fell to complicitous silence. After all, the two primary conditions for revolt had been removed: Hitler's foreign policy did *not* lead to war with the West (in 1938), and the Western powers had refused to make the essential first move. It was characteristic of the military's unwillingness to assume responsibility for its actions that it would not rebel until foreign invasion made it both necessary and safe to do so.

The abortive coup attempt of July 20, 1944, sprang from the same kind of reasoning. This time the more imminent danger came from the East with the advance of the Soviet army. Once again, visions of Bolshevik upheaval and the disappearance of German culture as they knew it pushed the conservatives and the army officers into the camp of conspiracy. This time the idea was for the Graf von Stauffenberg, a South German Catholic nobleman, to assassinate the Führer with a bomb. After the conspirators achieved control of the government, they were to offer the Western Allies an immediate cease-fire. German troops in Western Europe would withdraw to the old boundaries of the Reich and carry on the struggle against the Bolsheviks in the East. No mention was made about the future of such Nazi landmarks as Auschwitz or Treblinka. As it turned out, Stauffenberg's briefcase, when it exploded, was not close enough to Hitler to kill him. The coup attempt failed, and the war dragged on for another ten months. But who can really feel sorry for the generals? Hundreds of brave men and women in Germany defied both nature and the Nazi will in daily acts of survival and in small miracles of defiance. One cannot help wondering why any historian should devote so much time and energy to the comic exploits of the comfortably entrenched.

M. R. D. Foot's recent work, *Resistance*, aims at all of Europe. It is a giant undertaking that must take into account the profound differences in the nature of the various German occupations as well as the special historical circumstances of Europe's many states. Each opposition movement operated under particular conditions which defined the limits of possible resistance activity and pointed to the prospects for success and failure. Yet in the end Foot must try to mold the array of specific movements and circumstances into a coherent whole called Europe.

Surprisingly, *Resistance* is the most successful of the three works reviewed here. It is a model of simplicity, clarity, and level-headed judgment. As Foot explains in his introduction, his goals are "to explain what kinds of things resisters could and could not do; to assess, in outline, whether they achieved their aims; and to indicate points where more work needs to be done." Ambitious but superbly disciplined, the work is directed toward answering just the right questions: What could each group, considered in its own historical and political context, have been expected to accomplish against the Nazis and their collaborators? Were they successful or not? What was their long-term influence?

A second factor in Professor Foot's success follows closely on the heels of his penchant for smoke-clearing questioning: the constant effort to make historical judgments. Foot is altogether involved in his subject matter; he is always ready to assess: good or bad? right or wrong? This quality is missing in both Kedward and Hoffmann; neither acts as historical judge. The former is thoughtful and clever, but eventually loses control of his topic. The latter simply shirks this most basic of re-

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sponsibilities. Foot, however, holds back no punches. He does not hesitate, for instance, to choose between Tito and Mihajlović (he prefers Tito). He openly describes the unsavory maneuverings of Hungary's Admiral Horthy which made him suspect in the eyes of both the Germans and the Allies. If anything, Foot is on occasion too hasty to label or to dismiss out of hand. But this is a minor fault.

A good half of *Resistance* is devoted to what social scientists sometimes call "the building of a theoretical structure." What the author really is doing in this section is getting the issues straight, putting across the terms of debate. Foot establishes general definitions and delineates the categories with which he will later confront the historical record. Defining the ultimate objective of resistance as getting rid of the occupying power (I would only add that, for many, survival itself was an extreme act of defiance), he proceeds to determine what types of people resisted and what forms such activity could take. In doing so, Foot divides resistance behavior into three broad areas: intelligence, escape, and subversion (including sabotage, attacks on troops and individuals, and insurrection).

Foot's own experiences in the war—as British army officer and Special Operations Executive operating in France—contribute not only to the pace and excitement of the narrative but also to its prejudices. Foot emphasizes armed resistance and military intelligence at the expense of other forms of dissidence. Purely civilian actions do not receive enough mention. Occasionally, however, the author is keenly sensitive to the moral stature of unarmed resistance. He recounts the following episode with stark, understated bearing:

> At the very bottom of the nazi pyramid, in Mathausen concentration camp, prisoners worked all day in a deep quarry; except for an hour's interval at midday, when they drank soup and listened to the camp orchestra. It was accepted that those who could bear it no longer could go up to the top of the quarry and jump off. A few SS rather liked loitering at the top, to look and listen. Two French Jewish prisoners, brothers, decided to jump. They spent the midday interval shaking hands with all their friends; and when the whistle blew, walked up to the top of the quarry. Two of the usual jeering SS were there. They shook hands with them too, held on tight, and jumped; each took one with him.

Foot concludes that the accomplishments of resistance to Nazism in "material" terms were modest at best. Some gains were made in the area of intelligence, particularly with the Polish-British-French cracking of the German code "enigma." Much effort and money were expended on attempts at escape. Resisters throughout Europe displayed great courage in this regard, and many lives were sacrificed. The results in themselves are not meager: 33,517 British and American soldiers returned from enemy-held territory during the war. Resistance groups on the whole, however, could not boast of great success in rescuing Jews from deportation and murder. Foot cites the figure of 2,600 children sent to Palestine through the efforts of Wilfred Israel, and contrasts it with that of the 6,000,000 exterminated. He might well have included other instances of rescue (the 7,500 Jewish children in Vichy France, for instance), but the result would not have been different. Only a very small percentage of the Jewish population of Europe was saved through the efforts of resistance groups. Finally, in terms of sabotage and subversion, the resistance made a small dent in the German economy, perhaps a larger one on the field of battle.

Politically, the many resistance movements produced little in the way of revolution but a great deal toward the re-creation of a sense of a common European purpose and feeling. More important, the experience of resistance gave the European capitals a recaptured sense of independence, a new air of resiliency, worth, and national will. This is what de Gaulle was referring to when he told André Gillois, "Between you and me, Resistance was a bluff that came off." Foot concludes:

> Resistance's real strength in battlefield terms, in an age of armour and air warfare, was puny. But it had titanic, as it turned out invincible, strength in moral terms. It gave back to people in the occupied countries the self-respect that they had lost in the moment of occupation. People who had been in it, or near it, or simply with it in spirit, were able to face themselves calmly in a looking glass, and to know that they had not in the end been cowards; they had belonged to a band of radical companions, mostly unknown to each other, who had put their utmost into fighting evil.

In the thirty-five years that have elapsed

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since the war in the European theater ended, the subject of resistance seems to have lost neither its elusiveness nor its allure. The most basic of questions are still to be answered: What can one reasonably expect of people living under extreme conditions? What is the role of the historian as judge in this regard? At what point does he overstep the bounds of legitimate criticism?

The topic of resistance, however obscure, continues to command the historian's allegiance. There are very few historical incidents, or interpretations of such, which do not give way quickly to revisionist studies. Historical writing on the Cold War, for instance, has turned into a raging debate between the defenders and the accusers of American policy decisions. The fact of the matter is that the "winning" side of a conflict—if there is one—does not control the direction of historical interpretation for very long unless one of two conditions holds true: (1) its victory is so overwhelming as to stifle all sound from the other side (American conquest of the Indians, for example), or (2) the victory is of such scientific or moral certainty as to be unassailable (science over alchemy in the late Middle Ages). It is remarkable, then, that in the midst of our great fascination with resistance to Nazism no revisionist history has developed, no studies which call one person's resister another person's traitor, little which sets out seriously to debunk the subject. Why? Are we so certain that resistance activity made a material impact on the course of the war? Clearly not. Our steadfastness is rather a moral—perhaps a religious—one. Resistance in the end represented the fight to maintain human dignity and morality in the face of absolute evil—evil which for a time was triumphant over the European continent. The historian does not often face such radical opposites, such ultimate values, in struggle; and rarely does he find himself so compelled to plead the cause of one side. He is answering a moral imperative.

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The Lower Mythology and the Higher Clichés

GEORGE CORE

THE BIG GAME: COLLEGE SPORTS AND AMERICAN LIFE. *By Edwin H. Cady. University of Tennessee Press. $14.50.*

FROM RITUAL TO RECORD: THE NATURE OF MODERN SPORTS. *By Allen Guttmann. Columbia University Press. $12.95.*

JOCK CULTURE, U.S.A. *By Neil D. Isaacs. Norton. $9.95.*

THE JOY OF SPORTS: END ZONES, BASES, BASKETS, BALLS, AND THE CONSECRATION OF THE AMERICAN SPIRIT. *By Michael Novak. Basic Books. $12.50. Paper, $4.95.*

In the United States, for at least a decade, discontent has persistently irrupted, not only among undergraduate and graduate students but among their teachers. Today much of the discontent within academic walls lies in the realm of the humanities. Tillers of these stony fields (especially literature) have often looked enviously toward other pastures and nearly as often have bolted. They have seen the greening of America and of their own careers in terms of popular culture—film, comic strips and books, soap opera, and sports—or, more grandiosely, within the frames of ethnic studies and interdisciplinary studies. The professor who has rushed into the world of the silver screen or other precincts of popular culture has often so behaved because he, in some way, has been unsuccessful in the academic marketplace—the classroom or the publishing forum or both—and because he is secretly contemptuous of his chosen discipline. He gladly exchanges the rags of his professionalism for the trappings of a subject in which he is an amateur, but he transfers the knowledge and methods of his titular discipline to the new field. The results are usually pathetic and ludicrous, and nothing is more laughable than the effort to invest a course in, say, the funny papers with the seriousness and interest appropriate to classics or history. Soon now one expects to see hermeneutics applied to *Doonesbury*, anthropology to *The Phantom*, bibliography to strips which have ended (such as *Pogo* and *Li'l Abner*), urban studies to *Apartment 3G*, and so on.

The books considered here—Edwin Cady's *The Big Game*, Allen Guttmann's *From Ritual to Record*, Neil Isaacs's *Jock Culture*, and Michael Novak's *The Joy of Sports*—are in some ways indicative of the trend that I have churlishly adumbrated; but it should be stressed that each writer has achieved success as an academician (in that he has published widely in his chosen discipline) and that each is infected by a genuine—sometimes lunatic—attraction for sports. Only Guttmann remains stiffly at academic attention. Each author is more interested in sports as such than in popular culture or interdisciplinary studies; nevertheless both fads have profoundly marked all these books.

Seldom in this country has there been much first-rate writing on sports. Guttmann momentarily waxes eloquent about London, Lardner, Hemingway, and Malamud, but he devotes more space to English and European writers. If one thinks back over the American fiction that one has read which concerns football, baseball, and boxing, it is usually not of a high order unless the sport is dealt with only in passing, as in *The Great Gatsby*, which is incidentally about football. The level of sportswriting by journalists in the United States is abysmally low. Michael Novak's belief that sportswriting is superior to the writ-

GEORGE CORE, editor of the *Sewanee Review*, has written articles and reviews for the *Virginia Quarterly Review*, the *New Republic*, the *Southern Review*, and other magazines.

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ing of any other department of the typical American newspaper results from his characteristic enthusiasm and zeal about sports. (He draws this conclusion partly because most people read the sports section before going on to the remainder of the paper. What of the funnies?) My distinct impression is that the typical sportswriter is less literate than the typical sportscaster is grammatical and articulate, and that the sportswriter does more violence to the language. Much of the best writing on sports has been done for *The New Yorker*, but some of it has appeared in *Harper's*, the *Atlantic*, and *Esquire*. One does not expect to find first-rate prose in *Sports Illustrated*, but it occasionally appears when a contributor like William Zinsser is enlisted. From time to time one encounters a good product of editorial whimsy—for example, the special supplement of the *New Republic* for July 23, 1977, "Rule of the Games"—a brilliant collection of essays by academics.

Given this paucity of good writing about a subject on which more words are spent than any other in this country, one can be hospitable to the efforts of the academic breed to bring the presumed elegance and erudition of the Ivory Tower to the Big Game. The fact is that if the general level of the prose in these four studies were not long since entrenched in the academy, it would set back the clock of the written language for many years. The diction and syntax of these books furnish overwhelming proof—as does the spoken commentary of a Howard Cosell or a Hank Stram—of the validity of Jacques Barzun's dictum: "The predominant fault of the bad English encountered today is not the crude vulgarism of the untaught but the blithe irresponsibility of the taught." In this case the teachers are in the dock.

Each of the four authors tries in his own way to be a sportswriter. In so doing, he transfers the worst tendencies of academic writing—tortured syntax, cant diction, passive voice, grammatical conjunctivitis (beginning every other sentence and every third paragraph with a conjunction), hedging, indirection, obfuscation—to the loose and baggy writing of the sports page. The average sportswriter habitually repairs to a bedraggled stock of clichés, shuffling and reassembling them as the occasion seems to demand. His procedure resembles the politician whom Orwell has described in "Politics and the English Language" and whom we have all confronted on television and in the *Congressional Record*. "Modern writing at its worst," Orwell observes, "consists in gumming together long strips of words which have already been set in order by someone else, and making the results presentable by sheer humbug." The amount of humbug in the books at hand might have made Dr. Goebbels envious. The humbuggery smacks of sociology more strongly than it does of literary history or criticism.

Sports may be approached in a multitude of ways. One way has been thoroughly mined—though with little style and purpose—by the working newspaperman. His bag of tricks is limited. Of late it runs toward gossip and the "human interest" story—toward the life of the athlete off the playing field. That approach is usually numbingly dull, whether the athlete is addicted to drugs, or is fixated on his own ego, or is inclined to express himself with his fists. Out of uniform, the athlete is almost invariably a mundane chap of little interest. Present-day sportswriters, in their efforts to avoid Grantland Rice's "nice guy" approach (sharply delineated by Novak), generally end in being half-baked rather than hard-boiled. The academic sportswriter is equally transparent and fumbling. His style is riddled with cant words (*rethink*, *climax*, and *structure* as verb forms); dubious coinages (*ghettoize*, *dichotomization*); unhyphenated and impenetrable phrases (*organized living center groups*, *mass proxy color war*, *college athletics situation*); inelegant variation (*trance-struck*); inflated language (*ludic*, *cultic*, *intrapsychic*); and corn-pone locutions (*telling it like it is*, *show biz*, *trashing*).

Neil Isaacs, who writes for the *Washington Post* and whose latest book measures the intricacies of betting on sports, presents himself in a style that is close to being garden-variety journalism. "Big Daddy Lipscomb was something of an anomaly for pro football's PR long before he ODed." Only the word *anomaly* marks the professor who is slumming in the popular press—or is it the newspaperman slumming in academia? Occasionally Isaacs salts his text with a four-letter word to show that he has penetrated that inner sanctum of sports—the locker room. Isaacs's book, along

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with Novak's, is the most readable of the lot; but it has the loosest structure, and the chapters, which are often interlarded with interviews, students' comments (excerpted from papers and journals written for Isaacs's popular course, Jock Lit), and newspaper articles by the author, have the casual rambling quality of lectures, not the sharpness and symmetry of good essays.

The book that is the most ambitious and far-ranging—what members of the academic establishment now deem "insightful"—is markedly the hardest going for the reader. The substance of Edwin Cady's *The Big Game* has been mired in the viscosity of its prose. One marvels in perceiving that a man whose name appears as author or editor of twenty-five books has not mastered parallel structure. "The black student athlete must be treated by and relate to the academic and athletic communities exactly the same as the nonblack, certainly not disadvantageously." Mr. Cady has labored under the disadvantage of using a typewriter that has no hyphen on the keyboard. Nevertheless his style rises toward eloquence on more than one occasion, particularly in the conclusion: "It is, after all, the business of the Big Game to be symbolic and exemplary." One applauds the sentiment and then blanches at the unintended connotation of the word *business*.

Michael Novak and Allen Guttmann have written books that could easily be viewed as burlesque—if the academic book on sports were an established genre. In reading *The Joy of Sports*, one repeatedly confronts hyperbolic philosophical statements which it is difficult to take as anything but lighthearted and droll: "The basic reality of all human life is play, games, sport; these are the realities from which the basic metaphors for all that is important in the rest of life are drawn. Work, politics, and history are the illusory, misleading, false world. . . . Barbarians play in order to work; the civilized work in order to play." One may grant this basic statement of theme and Novak's complementary idea (which appears, mutatis mutandis, in the other books under review)—that sports constitute natural religions—without deciding how seriously Novak wishes to be taken when he says: "Sports are far more serious than the

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dramatic arts, much closer to primal symbols, metaphors, and acts"; "Sports are our chief civilizing agent. Sports are our most universal art form"; "Sports constitute the primary lived world of the vast majority of Americans"; "Play is reality. Work is diversion and escape"; "Sports are the real thing. Work is the opiate." *Amusing in its perversity, engaging in its willfulness and zest, irritating in its self-indulgence*—these and other phrases come to mind as one is beguiled and entertained by the playful Mr. Novak, a philosopher whose metaphysic is sports, an epicurean who is engulfed by his lust for games.

If the parodic element in *The Joy of Sports* (for which the very title is symptomatic) lies in Michael Novak's orchestration of his themes, in *From Ritual to Record* the same dimension appears in Allen Guttmann's solemn tone and flat-footed sociological prose as he charts—quite literally, by means of seventeen tables—such profundities as "Sports Featured on the Cover of *Sports Illustrated*" during the period 1955–74. Mr. Guttmann conceals his zest for sports as artfully as Messieurs Novak and Isaacs expose their frenzied love of athletic contests. Guttmann employs Karl Marx and Max Weber to explain the mystery of sports; he also repairs to Johan Huizinga, whose *Homo Ludens* is a canonical text for Cady, as is Clifford Geertz's "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight."

Everyone who now writes on sports is driven to confess his own experience on the playing fields of Eton or Hell's Kitchen or Lumberton, North Carolina (the home of Tom Wicker). My indelible experience in this department occurred in the Marine Corps, whose complement of officers is made up largely of varsity athletes and physical education majors hailing from state normal and agricultural colleges. That I ran across (at Camp Lejeune) a college dropout with whom I had played sandlot baseball and football as a child made the importance of sports seem all the more bizarre, authentic, and final. Being a marine is deadly serious play, and one of the Marine Corps's failings stems from the fact that many of its officers never go beyond the stage of being aggressive athletes and well-conditioned players, boys perpetually at physical, but not mental, attention. The military metaphor—football as a campaign—that Guttmann and Cady consider at some length strikes me as too clever by half. It is another instance of what Joseph Epstein has observed in his essay "Obsessed by Sports": "Literary men in general are notoriously to be distrusted on the subject. They dig around everywhere, and can be depended upon to find much treasure where none is buried."

The books considered here are drenched in such mythic analogues and cultural parallels. Aristotle, Roland Barthes, Norbert Elias, Sigmund Freud, James G. Frazer, Northrop Frye, Daniel Boorstin, Alexis de Tocqueville, Frederick Jackson Turner, George Steiner, Thorstein Veblen, and other cultural critics are invoked. The history of sports is also investigated: Guttmann describes Aztec and Mayan rituals in addition to Greek and Roman games, and all four writers consider the background of American sports, especially college and professional football, basketball, and baseball. Patriarchs and makers of the game, such as James Naismith and Amos Alonzo Stagg, appear in the wings. What makes *The Joy of Sports* and *Jock Culture* considerably more engaging than the two other books is that even if Novak and Isaacs don't teach American fiction (as Cady and Guttmann do), they understand the significance of character in the making of narrative. (Neither Novak nor Isaacs can create a scene with more than one character.) The appearance of such figures as George Blanda, Bob Cousy, Roy Jefferson, Sandy Koufax, John Lucas, Joe Namath, and Pat Summerall enhances each book by giving it concreteness and life. *The Big Game* and *From Ritual to Record* are abstract and bloodless by comparison. Novak keenly realizes the truth of John McPhee's observation that "now factual characters can live as much on the page as any fictional character." Factual characters constitute the bone and marrow of Novak's interchapters, which he calls sportsreels. Isaacs's analogous technique—the insertion of interviews and commentaries—is not nearly so effective thematically or dramatically.

Neil Isaacs does deserve high marks for courageously attacking the athletic establishment of his own university, Maryland: the director, the sports-information secretary, and the head coaches of the football and basketball teams. Jerry D. Claiborne and Lefty

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Driesell closely resemble the coaches who vied against one another as well as their colleagues in Lexington, Kentucky, during the late 1940s and early 1950s: Bear Bryant and Adolph Rupp. Rupp, who was apotheosized upon his death, was an unscrupulous man who had only two talents—winning basketball games and amassing the material goods of this world. He was almost as graceless in victory as in defeat. He was a bully who represented plebeian taste at its worst (once he refused Arthur Rubinstein the "privilege," as Isaacs gleefully reports, of practicing in Rupp's coliseum). Rupp's quaint notion of what he grandiosely called character-building led directly and inevitably to the point-shaving scandals that ruined the careers of Alex Groza and Ralph Beard and, later, of Bill Spivey. (These and other athletes at the University of Kentucky were put on the payrolls of tobacco warehouses, distilleries, and other businesses in central Kentucky, but they never did any work for the checks they collected.) Isaacs quite properly criticizes Woody Hayes and Jerry Claiborne severely; he could have just as well raked Bryant with grapeshot and canister. The brutal incident which Isaacs recounts about Claiborne—his being party to the injuring in practice of a "walk-on" punter—is emblematic of the callousness, indifference, selfishness, and inhumanity which frequently surface in the sports establishment—far more often, in all likelihood, in colleges than in the professional ranks. That this kind of coach—the relentless dictator and ruthless overseer—usually survives to become a greatly respected character and cracker-barrel philosopher stands as one of the most deplorable aspects of "organized" sports.

Isaacs is joined by Novak and Cady in calling for reform in the sports establishment, but, as all these gentlemen know, the corruption in sports reflects the more profound corruption in the body politic. Isaacs argues for legalized gambling; Novak wants quasi-federal regulation and oversight for such matters as the salaries of coaches and players, broadcasting, the number of teams, and the conduct of leagues. Isaacs, Novak, and Cady would like to see college athletes treated less like chattels and more nearly like human beings and actual students. Novak speaks for all four writers in saying that "it is a corruption, not only of sports, but also of the human spirit, to treat them as escape, entertainment, business, or a means of making money."

Whether or not one views sports, especially big-time football, basketball, and baseball, as secular religions, most readers will decide that Messieurs Cady, Guttmann, Isaacs, and Novak are more persuasive on practical and moral issues than on the mythic dimensions of competitive games. None of them seems to have read Philip Rahv's "The Myth and the Powerhouse" (1953). In that essay Rahv complains that mythomania is a form of nebulous religiosity (which Novak boldly announces and gladly embraces), pointing out that myth "is a certain kind of objective fantasy" whose presence does not authenticate art or religion or culture. He argues that the mythic imagination seeks to escape from the wounds of time and from the pain of historical experience, and that it worships primitivism and nostalgia. If one applies Rahv's strictures to this context, one sees that the academic writers being considered here would have done well to free sports from the bonds of myth, both classic and homemade in origin,

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and bring them into the clear light of day and the bracing climate of common sense. That is what the best sportswriters of our time—Roger Angell, John McPhee, A. J. Liebling—have done. One doesn't read Liebling to discover the mythic aspect of boxing, but Liebling does create a humorously ingenious myth in describing Archie Moore as Ahab and Rocky Marciano as Nemesis in the last chapter of *The Sweet Science*. And he throws in Pierce Egan and Albert Camus as well as Melville for style and leavening. When Moore was counted out, Liebling tells us, "It was a crushing defeat for the higher faculties and a lesson in intellectual humility, but he had made a hell of a fight."

Not one of these principals has made a hell of a fight, but all have been intellectual Ahabs tirelessly voyaging on strange seas of thought. What all of these writers and their sponsors (which include the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, Duke University, and the Aspen Institute) have failed to perceive is that some departments of human endeavor cannot be studied empirically or otherwise examined academically. James Thurber once argued that there is no place in the modern world for the streamlined mind. The evidence that one adduces from these books indicates that there is little place in sportswriting for the academic mind.

At the Cove

MARY OLIVER

Some mornings death won't stay
his black nugget self.
At the cove
I watch two fishermen
haul up the shore
their crate of silver meat
caught in the long night.
The sea,
for whom nothing is ever lost, only
pearled, crystallized,
transformed,
lies back under the sun,
rides shoreward over the stones,
slides powerfully out. She does this
over and over
while the fishermen kneel to count
the glittering slabs
in the pine crate that smells
like the soul of a tree.

● MARY OLIVER's work has appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Yale Review*, and the *Michigan Quarterly Review*. Her third book of poems, *The Night Traveler*, was published in 1977.

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The Reader Replies

Teggart of Berkeley

Thanks very much for the article on Teggart of Berkeley in the Winter 1978/79 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. I did not, do not, know Teggart or his work—to my shame and to my loss—but I should and wish I had. Although the word has lost effect through overuse on undeserving subjects, let me say anyway that it was a beautiful piece. It describes, I think, a person and a world too rarely experienced anymore, if ever, by more than a happy and fortunate few.

However content in his own work, he—and we—are fortunate in the sensitive way in which Robert Nisbet has brought him to life again as teacher and friend. He must be puffing along on Cloud Nine.

JACOB W. GRUBER
Department of Anthropology
Temple University
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Regressive Historians

Kenneth S. Lynn's "The Regressive Historians" in the Autumn 1978 SCHOLAR presents some interesting ideas which deserve, however, challenge and, eventually, rejection. His attack on Bernard Bailyn, in particular, represents the kind of insensitive reading, not just of history, but of historians, which this country can nowadays quite do without. We require these days precisely the vision of events which Bailyn so eloquently achieves and which Lynn totally misses. Bailyn is a historian whose knowledge of psychology is profound and whose sensitivity to the historical display of both psyche and spirit knows no peer. The American Revolution is, thanks to him, a considerably more deeply meaningful event in American history, and in world history, than it had previously been seen to be, and the depiction of it as such was rendered with the skill of a great man. With the subject of Thomas Hutchinson, Bailyn explores the realm of the tragic with a genuinely Sophoclean manner, leaving Lynn completely behind. Any reading of that book which sees Bailyn as a Loyalist apologist is so far from the truth that it makes one feel as if within the community of historians there is a rather wide and potentially harmful experiential gap between the likes of Lynn and the likes of Bailyn. If Lynn were to enjoy, for instance, the article on Whitehead (in the same issue) he may be said to have a dormant appreciation of the kind of history that Bernard Bailyn is writing. But dormancy is just the kind of state of mind that Bailyn seeks to render anachronistic. He says to Lynn, essentially: "Let us keep our tragedy to a minimum; let us have our new Revolution unbetrayed by the ignorance of past and present which bends our will toward lesser pursuits—to be so betrayed could rend us asunder and send our experiment on a course of defeat." It is precious stuff that Lynn is blindly attacking, and it is the stuff which can, in Bailyn and others, notably Erik Erikson, help to transform America into a place of unmistakable joy. That Lynn could himself help in that process is undeniable, but his experience and his view, therefore, of history is now not in the interest of that public which history has for so long sought to bring to life.

JULIAN C. HARTZELL
San Francisco, California

Kenneth S. Lynn protests against the "dirty work" of ideology in the historical writing of three scholars, but in doing so he reveals his own lapse into the dirty work of ad hominem abuse, surely the worst fall-out from the polemical style of the 1960s. He particularly maligns Bernard Bailyn and Eugene Genovese, who can take care of themselves so far as rational argument is the issue. Lynn accuses Bailyn of "grave deception," "overweening ambition," and lack of "moral stamina" with no better evidence than that of finding his arguments unconvincing. In similar fashion Lynn accuses Genovese of being a crooked "riverboat gambler" who is "prudently" obsequious to black-power spokesmen. (Anyone who has read Genovese's public criticism of separatist black studies programs, at a time when many faculty were endorsing them or "prudently" acquiescing in them, will be astonished to hear of his supposed timidity.)

If readers were to use Lynn's ad hominem

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method they would simply dispose of his charges as projections of paranoia and ambitiousness. But I charge him only with blindness to the wisdom and courtesy of the rule that debate is serious when it has a genuine respect for one's opposition, a trait that has always distinguished the men whose character he maligns. Such blindness, to use his own words, is "altogether unworthy of a responsible historian." In this respect it is Lynn who sounds like a "sixties writer," not Bailyn or Genovese.

Cushing Strout
Ernest I. White Professor of
American Studies and Humane Letters
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York

Kenneth Lynn replies: I cannot reply to Julian Hartzell's letter because I do not understand it. But I will say a few words about Cushing Strout's criticism.

In charging me with being abusive, Mr. Strout seems to forget that my announced purpose in writing "The Regressive Historians" was not only to expose the multitudinous errors and distortions that infest the fashionable books of Messrs. Bailyn and Genovese (and of Mr. Leo Marx, whom Mr. Strout oddly does not mention), but to account for the commission of those errors and the manufacture of those distortions. I sought to accomplish the latter objective by depicting an interaction between the personal drives and intellectual limitations of the historians themselves and the tempestuous political events of the 1960s and early 1970s.

At all times, my explanations of why Messrs. Bailyn and Genovese wrote as they did are solidly grounded in analyses of what they wrote. Thus Mr. Strout cannot accurately pass judgment on the quality of my work unless he is willing to consider it in its totality. But Mr. Strout is unwilling to do this, his weak excuse being that "Bernard Bailyn and Eugene Genovese . . . can take care of themselves so far as rational argument is the issue." In shirking the intellectual challenge posed by "The Regressive Historians," Mr. Strout lends credibility to it.

Nasty, British, and Short

It was startling to read in Peter Conrad's review of *The World of the Public Schools* (Autumn 1978) that Auden considered Gresham's School, in the 1920s, "a Fascist State." The school was somewhat pompous and preachy, silly at times, but there was no caning, no fagging except of the most innocuous kind, no bullying, no absurd codes of behavior which one ignored at one's peril, and by and large a good deal of both privacy and freedom. One could quite easily get round what rules there were. There were several good teachers on the staff and most, although not all of them, were kindly. The school did share with most boarding schools a lurking fear of homosexuality and was strictly monastic. It did discourage "romantic friendships" between boys, not very successfully and not, it seemed to me, very forcibly, either.

I was not perhaps quite so much at odds with the system as Auden must have been, but while at school would have been classified as very much of the same kidney: somewhat suspect, poor at games, a would-be poet, never promoted to prefect, generally rather unpopular. I didn't have Auden's extreme physical unattractiveness; he played Caliban in the school play without makeup. But I cannot believe that I was so insensitive as not to realize that I was living in a fascist state. To me it was much more like living with a rather prim maiden aunt, generally well disposed but with a few little quirks such as a total ban on candy, but not at all hard to manipulate. Gresham's prided itself on its difference from other public schools, especially in eschewing brutality and the worship of athletics. In the 1920s it produced Auden, Benjamin Britten, C. S. Cockerell, inventor of the Hovercraft and Donald Maclean, the defector, and I would have said interfered very little in their development.

All of which suggests that fascism, although it can be very real, can also be experienced where in fact it does not exist.

Alan Keith-Lucas
Distinguished Alumni Professor Emeritus
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Sinning in Black and White

I enjoyed Aristides' animadversions on the current state of television programming, but was surprised to find him twice misquoting Newton Minow's celebrated *mot*. If memory serves me right, Minow characterized television not as a "cultural wasteland" but rather a "vast wasteland."

This is a small matter, but it allows me an opening to observe that Minow might find that television has improved considerably since then: it is now merely a half-vast wasteland.

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